From the Field: Tested Participatory Activities for Trainers

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Compiled by CATHERINE D. CRONE

and CARMAN ST. JOHN HUNTER

world education

Dedicated
to the
memory of
Fredrica Lila Teer

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Acknowledgments

We are indebted to the consultants and trainers whose work has provided the material for this book. They have given us permission to adapt activities they have used successfully in various parts of the world so that we could make them available to others working in the field of nonformal education for adults. They, and their institutional affiliations, are listed in a special section at the end of the book (see page 144). Those who have contributed exercises have given us not only materials for use in the field, but also a flavor of the context in which the exercises have been used—what actually happened in a particular training session. The exercises and experiences are theirs; the format and sometimes the language have been standardized for the sake of consistency.

The sourcebooks we consulted are listed in the bibliography but we must give special acknowledgment to *Working With Villagers*, jointly developed by the American Home Economics Association and the East-West Communication Institute. Two World Education specialists, one a staff member and one a consultant, took part in the preparation of that training manual; as a result, many of the activities recorded here appear there as well, although in another form. They are indicated by an asterisk in the Table of Contents. We are grateful to Ampara G. Rigor of the University of the Philippines and Patchanee Natpracha of International Family Planning, Thailand, whose contribution to *Working With Villagers* also helped shape our own thinking.

Gwen Moss helped in the original sifting through of World Education staff and consultant reports to select exercises for inclusion in this volume. The publications staff of World Education—Martha Keehn, Margaret Brehmer, Sue Criscitiello, and Joyce Rubin—saw the manuscript through many versions and prepared the text for publication.

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Above all we acknowledge the contribution of the hardworking trainees whose participation in workshops and seminars brings these exercises to life. They came from many agencies and many countries: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Pakistan, Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand, the United States, and Venezuela. In this volume, they share their experience with colleagues everywhere.

Catherine D. Crone
Carman St. John Hunter

Introduction

This manual has been prepared by trainers for trainers—or for anyone who, like us, wants to understand more clearly the exhilarating and complex process of teaching and learning. It is designed especially for those of you who are trying to help others work effectively with adult learners. The activities in these pages have all been used in field situations by World Education trainers or consultants.

This is a resource book. It is not a plan for a conference or workshop. You will have to decide when and how to use the exercises.

We believe that people learn best by *doing* and then reflecting on what happened. That is the reason that all of the activities included here are "participatory." That is, they involve the trainees in doing something and then analyzing and reflecting on what they have learned and how they learned it. Other ideas about learning also underlie these activities:

1.—Learners are actually in charge of their own educational experience and its results. They will make of whatever is offered something quite unique, and it will be shaped by their own experience, values, and view of the world.

2.—Learners will bring into their own lives those things that enable them to do something they need or want to do—to use mathematical symbols, to prepare more nutritious meals, to organize a workers' cooperative, to get a new job, to deal with a bureaucracy, to teach a class, to make better sense of the events and experiences of life.

3.—Learners reject what they don't need. Thus education is a constant exercise in discarding useless material and adopting new ideas and practices that seem useful. The task of trainers—and teachers—is to make the best match possible between what they can offer and what the learners actually need.

Education based on these ideas is sometimes called *learner-centered* or *participatory*, and emphasizes mutual learning rather than teaching. In this kind of process, the teachers or leaders or trainers take on some roles that may be rather different from those they are used to. What they are learning is not so much how to teach nutrition or family planning or moral values. What they are learning, rather, is to work with particular groups of people who are affected by their own unique circumstances. Specific content may be an important ingredient. But there are other ingredients even more important.

The first is finding out what the participants' needs and abilities are. This may mean shedding one's biases and preconceptions and developing a new sensitivity. Another is gaining (and practicing) the skills to plan and carry out activities that respond to those needs. And a third is to capitalize on the group members' capabilities, for they can and will contribute experiences, ideas and solutions.

Your primary responsibility as a trainer is to clear

the way for learning on the part of those with whom you work. You can do so in a number of ways:

- Discover with them and from them what they need in order to be better teachers and trainers.
- Help them to find resources—people, materials, activities, or information—that will increase their confidence and skill.
- Intervene when progress is slow to suggest other ways of moving.
- Help them to see how their experience relates to the concerns of others.
- Invent ways for them to test their new skills in real situations.
- React honestly to their efforts to use their new information and skills and help them to react in the same fashion.
- Encourage them to find their own answers even when it might be easier for you to supply a solution that seems obvious to you.
- Become a learner with them by admitting your own inadequacies—your own need for help or additional information.

These principles apply in any learning situation. They apply in your work as a trainer and in the trainees' work in villages or urban communities. Teachers tend to teach in the way they were taught. Those you train are likely to use the methods and approaches you use with them. Their work with learning groups will be modeled on what you do. If you treat them like adults with valuable experience and insights, then the chances are that they will be able to do the same with others. Like other people, they will learn best by doing. If you simply tell them about the values of learner-centered education without engaging their special needs and skills, then they too will probably fall back into traditional authoritarian patterns.

As you use the activities described here, and adapt them to your group, you may find the following questions helpful:

Before using an activity—What in the lives of these trainees makes this particular exercise appropriate now? What changes may be necessary for them to learn the most from the activity? Why?

After using the activity—What have I learned from using this activity? What have the trainees learned? How do I know this?

As you ask yourself such questions, and think through the decisions you make as a trainer, ask them also of your trainees and go through your decision-making process with them as well. This will give them an inside view of what it feels like to have the responsibility to help others learn. The most significant learning your trainees receive may come from watching you—how you perform and how you react to praise and to criticism.

While you will probably want to begin with activities that help the trainees to become a group and to recognize their own stereotypes about adult learners, we provide no road map for choosing activities. We assume that you will probably move through the sequence of first assessing the needs of the trainees and then setting your training objectives in response to those needs. Finally, you will plan activities that reflect the objectives and fit within the time and place available—whether the training is scheduled for a day or a week or longer, whether it is occurring in a residential setting or in a place where trainees come and go.

Since we have so often been asked how certain learning activities worked, what happened in the field when a trainer used a technique, we have included some of our experiences—and something of the reality of the specific learning situations—for we believe that learning takes place when learners' specific needs and the realities of their lives are being addressed. People respond to what is familiar to them, to whatever helps them cope with their own life situations. But suggestions that may be relevant to needs but that do not acknowledge the limitations of reality can hardly be helpful. Learning activities, therefore, always need to be adapted to a special learning group. We trust your sensitivity to make the necessary changes for your group.

In the same way, directions in the manual are meant as suggestions. Don't feel that you really need one blackboard and six pieces of newsprint if what you have is six blackboards, plenty of chalk and no felt-tipped pens. We have just tried to list all of the materials we used so that you can plan what you'll need to supply. Make whatever substitutions seem practical. Some of the activities are long and can be tiring. We have not built in coffee breaks or other changes of pace, but trust in your instincts, again, to know when your group is getting tired or needs to relax.

We have grouped the activities under five major categories:

Becoming a Learning Group (Section One): World Education trainers used the activities in this section for a number of purposes, usually as the session was

getting under way. They were used to discover what participants expected from the training session; to increase their self-awareness; to enable them to learn about each other; to stress cooperation and trust in a learning group; and to help them look at differing assumptions about the purposes of education.

Discovering Needs (Section Two): The activities described in this section were used to help trainees to see that there may be differences between the way they view learners' needs and the way learners view them. Some are intended to help participants to define needs and needs assessment, or to become familiar with a number of simple ways to collect information from and about learners.

Choosing and Using Methods and Materials (Section Three): This section covers a wide range of techniques and materials that encourage adults to take an active part in their own learning. The most effective sequence is for the trainees first to see these techniques and materials being used by a trainer to help the group master information or skills. When they learn something themselves by using a particular technique or particular materials, they will understand how to plan learning activities in which they can also use these methods and materials with others. And they need a chance to practice adapting techniques for other uses and, using local resources, to make their own learning materials.

Evaluating Impact and Results (Section Four): The activities in this section were used to assess learning activities in terms of how well they fulfill learners' objectives. Simple methods for evaluating the learning session and the facilitator's performance are also included.

Planning and Field-Testing Participatory Learning Activities (Section Five): These activities differ from those in the other sections in that they are interrelated and need to be used in sequence. They provide a model for helping the trainees themselves to plan a series of learning activities and then carry out those activities with a group of learners. You may not always be able to provide an opportunity for extensive field-testing, but the principle is significant. Unless trainees can practice what they are learning and get immediate feedback from colleagues and from you, it will be harder for them to consolidate new skills and attitudes toward learner-centered, participatory education. So we urge you to try to build in some practice sessions under circumstances that are as near the real working situation of the trainees as possible.

At the beginning of each exercise we describe the particular occasion and the reason the trainer decided this specific activity was needed. Many of the activities have also been used in other settings and for other purposes. Sometimes these other uses are mentioned in the "What Happened" section at the end of each activity. You can adapt any of them to fit your own needs. In many of the activities we speak of villages and villagers as the setting and constituency for the work of the trainees, but the activities are equally appropriate in urban settings.

We have tried to estimate the time involved for each exercise, but this will of course vary. If the group is large, you may want to make part of the activity a task for small groups.

Since what is being described is a leadership role in relation to some training event, we use the terms *trainer* and *consultant* interchangeably. Those who are enrolled in the event, we call *trainees* or *participants*, whether they are educators, field workers, program planners, facilitators, or trainers of persons for these roles.

When we know the original source of an activity, we have included it, but in general we merely say "used by" and give the name of the person in whose field report we found reference to the exercise. What is described here often represents a "second or third generation" use, that is, an adaptation of an original design that is part of the repertoire of many trainers and consultants.

We hope you will find these exercises useful and look forward to hearing from you as you adapt them to your own needs. Your responses will reflect the participatory nature of this enterprise: we welcome the chance to exchange ideas with you.

DAVID WALKER

SECTION ONE:

Becoming a Learning Group

Exercises in this section are introductory, to be used in the early stages of the life of a training workshop—or, indeed, of any learning group. We have discovered, however, that even a group that has been together for some time may occasionally lose its sense of cohesion. Communication may break down; objectives may be lost from sight. When this happens, you may want to return to one of these exercises in team building or communication.

The first task of a trainer or group facilitator is to help the trainees feel free and open in the group. If they are to act as resources to each other, and are to allow the trainer to work with them as a co-learner, they need to see and appreciate the different gifts that each member brings to the common task.

The group members may already know each other. But engaging in new activities together can help create new, positive impressions and a specific focus for the tasks they now face together. The present learning experience can erase previous negative impressions, providing a good working atmosphere and common references for you and all the members of the group.

You are probably an "unknown" to the members of your group. They will need to develop a sense of freedom in your presence. You can be useful to them only if they know you—what you bring as well as the ways that you want to make your help available. They have known other consultants and trainers before you. They will rely on their past experience and treat you as they did their last trainer unless, by the way you act as well as by your words, you offer them opportunities to discover who you are. These activities are, therefore, of far greater value than mere introductory statements as a way of beginning a new learning experience.

Discovering Expectations

TIME: ½ hr.

"Before initiating the training workshop, we wanted to check the plans we had already made against the expectations of the participants. Their responses would condition how we would present the purposes and events of the workshop. We also wanted to see how closely our understanding of staff and participant roles resembled those of the participants."

SETTING

At the registration desk or at a meal or social hour before the official opening of the workshop

MATERIALS

"Workshop Participant Expectations" sheet (page 8) and pencil for each participant

Newsprint and felt pen

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Hand out "Workshop Participant Expectations" sheets.

Note: If the sheets are distributed during registration, give information about when they are to be returned; if a meal precedes the first session, the sheets can be filled in and collected immediately.

STEP 2 (for the staff)–Record responses on newsprint.

Note: The tabulated responses should be shown during the first session and used as a reference point for presenting information about the objectives and schedule of events and for describing the roles of staff and participants.

WHAT HAPPENED

The responses were useful in revealing disparities in expectations. Such disparities have occurred most often when participants, accustomed to more traditional educational events, expect that the staff will give lectures on a variety of techniques and methods. In another workshop, however, we forgot to hand out the sheet and, instead, used it after we had already presented the objectives and plans. It was obviously useless since participants merely repeated what they had already heard!

Used by Catherine D. Crone in a nonformal education workshop in the Philippines with the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Please write, in a few sentences, what you expect will take place at this workshop, what role you think the workshop organizers will play, and what you think you will be expected to do as a participant.

At this workshop we will

____

____

____

____

____

The workshop organizers will

____

____

____

____

____

The participants will

____

____

____

____

____

SIGNATURE NOT NEEDED

Participants' Hopes

TIME: 1½ hrs.

The trainer and planning committee wanted to learn from the participants themselves what they hoped to gain from the workshop, so they could test the plans already developed and review them in light of the reality within which they would be working.

SETTING

A quiet, informal meeting place

MATERIALS

A tentative schedule for the workshop, as developed by the planning committee (written on newsprint or on sheets for distribution)

Newsprint and felt pens (for use during small-group sessions)

Tape or thumbtacks

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Note: If participants begin a training session by expressing their expectations, they anticipate that these expectations will be met to some extent during the program. The use of this exercise, therefore, requires a degree of flexibility. The schedule should not be completely "set" in advance, and trainers should be willing to make some revisions in their plans. In one workshop, the trainers asked for participants' expectations and then ignored them. Not surprisingly, the frustrated participants became antagonistic toward the trainers.

STEP 1–Divide participants into small groups. If there is a planning committee, assign one member of the committee and a consultant to each group as full participants.

STEP 2–Ask each group to choose a recorder/reporter. Give members an opportunity to talk about their own backgrounds, interests, and expectations of the workshop. What kind of events and results do they hope to see? Have the recorders list these hopes and expectations on newsprint sheets.

STEP 3–Reconvene the participants. Have each recorder make a report from the group's newsprint sheets. Tape or tack the lists on the wall so that everyone can examine them.

STEP 4–Ask a member of the planning committee to put up the tentative workshop schedule and show where and how various group expectations are already included in the plans.

STEP 5–Indicate ways that the planning committee will work to incorporate additional hopes expressed by the group. Point out any individual expectations that may not be accommodated in the workshop and explain why not.

WHAT HAPPENED

Participants clarified their own expectations and were better able to see them in the context of what others expected.

Some of the mystique of the consultant as "expert" was dispelled through her participation as an equal. The planning committee gained valuable information about the participants as individuals. An atmosphere of collaboration was established as everyone worked to modify plans to bring individual goals, and those set out by the committee, into closer harmony. Both participants and facilitators, through direct personal involvement, gained a sense of "ownership" in the final working plan.

Adapted from an activity used by Suzanne Kindervatter in Indonesia and Thailand.

Speaking in Pictures

TIME: 1 – 2 hrs.

"We decided that a good beginning for this workshop—which involved trainees from several countries—would be to underscore creativity and inventiveness. We also wanted participants to get acquainted in a new way and to experience how drawings can help communication."

SETTING

A quiet meeting place large enough for the participants to work in small groups

MATERIALS

Newsprint and colored felt pens for each small group

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Introduce participants very briefly and divide them into small groups.

STEP 2–Ask each group to spend 20 to 30 minutes getting acquainted and then to take another 15 minutes for making a collective drawing on newsprint to describe the group and its members. No words may be used in the drawing. The picture may be as simple or as elaborate as the group wishes. It's not a drawing contest—the quality of the artwork is not important.

STEP 3–Ask each small group to decide how to use the drawing to introduce its members to the total group.

STEP 4–Spend a few moments, after all groups have reported, discussing how the drawings contributed to communication. Summarize by reviewing with participants the range of interests and abilities that were illustrated by the drawings.

WHAT HAPPENED

Some participants entered into the activity wholeheartedly; others were reticent. The pictures they produced (see drawings in margin) needed some explanation to understand how they showed group members, but the exercise was fun and a good spirit of group cohesiveness developed.

Used by Noreen Clark and James McCaffery at the beginning of a three-week evaluation workshop in Kenya cosponsored by the National Christian Council of Kenya and World Education.

Ice Breaker

TIME: 1 hr.

The trainer was working with a group of trainers. He wanted to involve them in a non-threatening get-acquainted exercise.

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Strips of paper (enough for each participant), each with one line of a couplet written on it

Blackboard and chalk

or

Newsprint and felt pens

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Divide the large group into subgroups.

STEP 2–Write a sample couplet on the board (e.g., "Where there's a will, there's a way"), read it aloud, and explain that the participants will receive a piece of paper with one line of a couplet written on it. Their task is to find the person who has the rest of the couplet.

STEP 3–Mix up the couplet strips and distribute one to each person. When all of the participants have found the person with the other half of their couplet, ask them to sit together.

STEP 4–Ask each pair to recite its couplet.

STEP 5–Ask each pair to write down their expectations of the workshop on the back of their strips of paper.

STEP 6–After 10 minutes ask one person from each pair to report briefly on their discussion of expectations.

WHAT HAPPENED

The couplets used in this instance were local folk sayings. You might want to use poems or proverbs that will be familiar to your trainees. Despite instructions to discuss their conceptions, perceptions, and expectations of the workshop, each small group focused its discussion on the meaning of the folk saying. The group members found that such common proverbs as "Slowly but surely" and "I hear, but I forget; I see, and I remember; I do, and I understand" took on a new significance in view of workshop goals.

Used by John Pettit at the National Center for the Development of Learning Activities in Indonesia.

How Do I Behave in a Group?

TIME: 45 minutes

"It was the opening day of a two-week workshop. The participants were about to meet for the first time in small work groups. Two weeks would be a very short time for them to accomplish the task of learning together to develop educational materials. We wanted the groups to become functioning teams as soon as possible and used this activity to encourage them to look at themselves and to learn something about others in relation to the process of group formation."

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Prepared question sheets (one for each participant—see below)

Questionnaire

When I am in a group, I generally:

- ☐ prefer to sit quietly and listen to others
- ☐ feel quite at ease participating in discussion
- ☐ find myself ready for some kind of leadership role
- ☐ (sometimes) wish I could take over and structure the discussion
- ☐ feel ill at ease
- ☐ prefer to listen for a while and then participate in the discussion after I have a feel for the group
- ☐ other (specify) ____________________

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Distribute the questionnaires. Explain that this activity will help each person to look at his or her own way of taking part in new groups and to discover how others feel about the same experience.

STEP 2–Ask each participant to place a check next to the phrases that best correspond to her or his own feelings.

STEP 3–Tell them to take the finished sheets *without signing them* to their first assigned group meeting.

STEP 4–Have the groups collect and collate the sheets to form small-group profiles based on the anonymous responses of their memberships.

STEP 5–Suggest that when the "profiles" have emerged, each group should discuss the implications for their work together: Are we all listeners? all leaders? Do many of us feel ill at ease in new groups? What may happen in our group because of who we are? Knowing this much about ourselves, what can we do to help each other so that we can work well together? What have we learned?

Note: There should be no suggestions prior to the group's work that participants can or should drop their anonymity. It may happen, but it should be the decision of the participants.

WHAT HAPPENED

The participants enjoyed the activity. They soon gave up anonymity in order to talk more freely and to help each other. Some described the satisfaction of discovering others who felt as they did. At the same time, they felt more freedom to change their usual behavior in order to enable this group to work. The ice was broken, and people said they knew each other better.

Designed by Lyra Srinivasan and used in a workshop in the Philippines.

Team Building...No Talking!

TIME: 1 hr.

"I was working with a group whose members already knew each other quite well. Some were teachers, some supervisors, others recreation leaders and members of the institution's maintenance staff. Most tended to see and behave toward their colleagues according to status and to each person's responsibilities within the organization of which they were all part. I hoped to break through the stereotypes and the sense of hierarchy that existed."

SETTING

An open space large enough for participants to move about freely

MATERIALS

None

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Say to the participants: "When I give the signal, I'd like you to get out of your chairs and move around. Greet everyone in the room *without talking*. Keep moving until you've made nonverbal contact with everyone in the room."

STEP 2–Ask each participant to choose a partner and, again without speaking, communicate a piece of information to that person.

STEP 3–Have each pair join another pair and communicate silently while sitting on the floor in a group of four.

STEP 4–Ask participants to talk about their reactions to the experience and what they have learned from it.

WHAT HAPPENED

Participants agreed that nonverbal communication is very difficult. They noted that although the entire body can communicate feelings and attitudes, we depend heavily on eye contact for meaning. Some felt they had come to know others better than they ever had using words.

Note: When this activity was used with a different group, who were particularly conscious of their status, the discussion brought out a newfound awareness of how a glance of indifference or superiority can impede group progress. They also became aware, conversely, that a nonverbal show of approval and support can encourage people to become more involved in a session–can inspire greater participation. The activity also helped them to realize that people can and often do "speak" to each other without words.

Used by Fredrica Teer in New York City with staff of the New York State Division for Youth.

Forming Small Work Groups

TIME: ½ hr.

"It was early in the workshop. None of the participants knew what to expect. We had told them they would be making or influencing all decisions that affected the life of the workshop. Now it was time to divide into small work groups. How could we do that without making arbitrary assignments? We finally designed the process described here."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Small slips of paper with each person's name, agency, special skill, e.g., *training, materials development, evaluation.* (Where skills are unknown, leave space for participants to write them in.)

A bulletin board marked off in as many sections as the number of work groups to be formed

Tape, pushpins (thumbtacks)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Give each person his or her own slip. Have everyone check it for accuracy and fill in any missing information.

STEP 2–Explain that the object is for everyone to be as satisfied as possible with his or her work group assignment. Subject to certain simple ground rules to ensure that each group has the best possible balance as to size, experience, viewpoint, and variety of skills, all will be free to choose their own assignments. The rules:

- Groups should be about the same size.
- No two people from the same agency should be in any one group.
- There should be the greatest possible representation of the various skills in each group.

STEP 3–Have participants, using these guidelines, attach their own name slips to the bulletin board to form the groups.

WHAT HAPPENED

Everyone had a good time, and most expressed satisfaction at being able to choose their own teammates. Whether or not it was due to their method of formation, these groups, throughout the workshop, were notable for their sense of autonomy and great internal cohesiveness.

Designed by Lyra Srinivasan and used in a workshop in the Philippines with staff of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

Triadic Interviews

TIME: 1 hr.

"We were starting a workshop with youth workers in an inner city neighborhood. Because they would be devising learning strategies and materials that reflected the needs expressed by their young clients, we wanted to work first on interviewing techniques and communication skills, emphasizing the importance of asking the right question and listening attentively to the answers. We explained that, as well as helping everyone to know each other better, this activity would provide practice in asking questions and in organizing and recalling responses."

SETTING

A space or spaces large enough for portions of the group to go where they cannot be overheard by the others

MATERIALS

None

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Divide the participants into groups of three (triads) by numbering off. Have each group decide who will be person *A*, person *B* and the *Observer*.

STEP 2–Outline the following process. In each triad, the observer will go where he or she can't overhear, while *A* interviews *B*. The object is for *A* to discover as much as possible about *B's* personal history, interests, reasons for being in the workshop, etc.

After five minutes, in each group of three, the observer will return, and interview *A* to discover what has been learned about *B*. *B* remains silent during this interview, but at its conclusion may supply any omissions and correct misinformation. The triad will then discuss the kinds of questions used and the answers they elicited. Continue the process until everyone has played all three parts.

STEP 3–Either maintain the small groups or gather all the triads together for discussion. Useful points to consider might include: What questions made for a successful interview? What factors contributed to misinformation or misunderstanding? Why did an interviewer omit or distort information when trying to recall it for the observer? Has this activity led to better understanding among the three participants?

WHAT HAPPENED

In this instance, members of the small groups challenged each other freely, and the activity helped them identify and examine some of the barriers that exist to both gathering and recalling information.

Used by Fredrica Teer in a workshop in New York City.

Broken Squares

TIME: 45 minutes

"We were working with a group of 'lone operators,' people accustomed to competing and getting rewards for individual accomplishments. We wanted to give the group members the experience of working as a team. The work that lay ahead depended on cooperation and on everyone's being able to draw on each other's skills and information."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard

One set of "Broken Squares" (15 pieces) for each team of 5 players (use key below to make a set of 6" x 6" cardboard squares)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Divide the participants into teams of five players, and assign an observer to each team.

STEP 2–Introduce the activity by explaining that the game they are about to play is a learning experience that will be discussed later.

STEP 3–Mix each set of 15 pieces, and distribute three pieces at random to each of the five players on each team.

STEP 4–Say to the teams: "Each member of your team has three pieces of paper. When I say 'begin,' the task before the five of you is to form five perfect squares of equal size. Your task will not be complete until each of you has in front of you a perfect square of the same size as those before the other four players. Here are the rules of the game:

- No team member may speak.
- Team members may not signal others to give them a piece of paper.
- Members may, however, give pieces of paper to other players on their team.
- You have 20 minutes to solve the puzzle.
- The observer for each team will watch to be sure that team members observe the rules."

STEP 5–Tell the teams to begin.

STEP 6–Call the time at the end of 20 minutes.

STEP 7–Show those players who have been unable to complete the task in the time allowed how to form the five squares.

STEP 8–Lead a discussion about the game.

- Who was willing to give away pieces of the puzzle?
- Did anyone finish his or her puzzle and then separate from the rest of the group?
- Was there anyone who continually struggled with the pieces, but was unwilling to give any or all of them away?
- Was anyone in the group frustrated?
- Was there any critical point when the group began to co-operate?
- Did anyone try to break the rules by talking or pointing?

STEP 9–Allow time for them to suggest lessons they learned.

STEP 10–Explain that the purpose was to demonstrate the importance of cooperation in solving problems and that learners need to share whatever they have, or know, if they are going to learn from each other and find solutions. This includes taking into account the unspoken needs of others.

STEP 11–Invite discussion by suggesting: "Let's pretend that these pieces of paper represent what enablers and teachers–and learners–know." Identify learners as village people, adults in an urban area, or whatever constituency is appropriate for the people with whom you are working. Ask the following discussion questions:

- What are some of the things that a field worker or teacher knows? (List responses on blackboard.)
- What are some of the things that the learner knows? (Make a second list of responses.)

Note: Some things that learners know might include local customs, personal experience and feelings, specific economic and work problems, interaction with bureaucracies, folk wisdom, religious teaching, etc. Ask the question:

- Is it possible to solve problems without having all of the pieces–or all that everyone knows?

STEP 12–Discuss the two "response" lists. Help participants to see that if any solutions are to be found to the learners' problems in relation to their own educational needs, they must draw on the knowledge and specific experience of the learners in the midst of the learning situation.

WHAT HAPPENED

Three groups, in different sections of the room, played the Broken Squares game. One group completed the five squares in nine minutes; neither of the other groups completed all of the squares within the time

limit. During the discussion that followed, the trainees said that the activity had made them aware of the importance of sharing, cooperation, and understanding the needs of others. The group also felt this activity had helped them to see the importance of looking at all aspects of a situation before making a final decision: that when everyone understands the total problem and the steps to be taken towards a solution, many obstacles can be avoided. They realized this when they saw that it was possible to form several of the squares in different ways, but that there was only one way to form them so that all of the pieces were used in making the five squares.

When we used Broken Squares with a group of planners who were not yet at the point of recognizing the potentially valuable contribution villagers can make to project planning, they were surprised to find that villagers are very adept at the game. They couldn't imagine that villagers could do something that planners had been unable to do. It turned out to be an important lesson.

Adapted from A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training, Volume I, *and used by Catherine D. Crone in a workshop in Pakistan.*

Blindfold Game

TIME: ½ hr.

The trainer was working with a new group. She wanted members to feel free to talk, not only about past and future activities, but about their feelings of the moment. She also wanted to emphasize the need for the trainer and group members to help each other in every stage of their work together.

SETTING

A clear open space, large enough for participants to move around in a circle

MATERIALS

Enough blindfolds for half the group

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Suggest that this activity ought to be fun–that they will be playing a kind of game.

STEP 2–Ask the participants to pair off. One of the partners will be *A*, the other, *B*.

STEP 3–Have the *A's* securely blindfold the *B's*.

STEP 4–Tell the *A's* to lead the blindfolded *B's* around the area. Although complete silence is a rule, the *A's* are responsible for the *Bs'* safety. The pairs should keep moving. Be as adventuresome as possible during a 10-minute time period.

STEP 5–Ask the *A's* and *B's* to switch roles for the next 10 minutes. The *B's* will blindfold the *A's* and lead them around.

STEP 6–Reconvene the group for a guided discussion. Ask specific questions: How did you feel as the leader? as the follower? Were you afraid when you were blindfolded? Did you learn anything new about yourself?

WHAT HAPPENED

When they spoke about being blindfolded, everyone expressed feelings of helplessness, dependence, and awkwardness in the unfamiliar situation. In discussion, they acknowledged their need to develop a sense of mutual trust and of openness about their feelings.

Note: These same feelings of dependency were expressed by a group of village women when the game was used by a field worker from BRAC (the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) on her initial visit to a village. There, the village women also turned the game around to see how their facilitator felt when she took a turn at being blindfolded. Everyone enjoyed the fun and the rapport the game created.

Used by Fredrica Teer in New York City with staff members of a New York State Division for Youth project.

What Is Education For?

TIME: 1½ hrs.

"We had two purposes in mind. We wanted the group to focus on the goals of educational activities. We also wanted them to gain a basic understanding of the evaluation process and to think about ways to determine whether the goals set by the group were reached."

SETTING

A quiet meeting room, or rooms, where small groups can work

MATERIALS

Newsprint and felt pens (enough for each small group)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Divide participants into groups of five to eight persons and ask each group to list on newsprint their answers to the question "What is education for?" In essence, they are to describe as specifically as possible what they understand the purposes of education to be.

STEP 2–Ask the groups to use their list of the *purposes* of education in drawing up a second list of indicators that would tell them if these educational goals had been reached. Ask them to list only things that can be verified, that is, observed or documented in some way. If "to learn new things" is stated as a purpose of education, ask, for example, how they would know that new things have indeed been learned: What would they see or hear, or otherwise be able to document? Ask groups to be as specific as possible.

STEP 3–Ask each group to plan a report to share their ideas with the other participants. Depending on their previous experience with visual aids or other materials, groups may be encouraged to use any technique they wish for presenting their reports: flexiflans (see pages 98 to 100), drawings (see page 11), a recorded discussion, or whatever.

STEP 4–Invite each group to make its report. You may want to guide the discussion by examining two questions in particular:

- What do groups say about the *purposes* of education?
- What things signify successful education to group members?

Summarize by pointing out that educational purposes are based on what people value and need; that education fundamentally implies change; and that in order to assess success or failure we must be able to document the change that occurs.

STEP 5–(Optional) If the groups have used visual aids or innovative techniques to make their reports, ask the trainees to comment on how the aids did or did not enhance the presentations.

WHAT HAPPENED

The groups pressed each other for definitions and clarity but, in general, let each set of ideas stand.

The group reports were remarkably similar. They included such ideas as: educational activities should increase cooperation, create self-reliance, develop skills and the exchange of ideas, increase knowledge, and promote change.

In this case, the groups used flexiflans in making their reports—which made for livelier reporting than simple sharing of lists. It was more difficult for the group to come to any agreement on ways to measure the indicators they had chosen. The staff decided to be satisfied with the good beginning the group had made in understanding the goals of education—and to leave questions about measuring the indicators for later.

Designed and used by Noreen Clark and Catherine D. Crone in Kenya.

SECTION TWO:
Discovering Needs

By the time you begin your work with any particular group, someone else will already have determined the need for you to be there and will, to some degree, have established the broad outlines of your assignment.

Perhaps you are a consultant/trainer in a workshop on learner-centered education. Or you may have been asked to help a group develop materials or become more adept in evaluation techniques. Whatever your assignment, some needs assessment has probably already taken place, and you will have to rely on the accuracy of that assessment. On the other hand, some of the group may have doubts about the task and you will also want to be sensitive to those doubts. Some group members may not be convinced that they need what you are going to offer. As a trainer/consultant, you are constantly working on at least two levels at once: learning about the needs of the trainees and, at the same time, helping them learn how to assess correctly the needs of those they will be working with in the future.

The most potent demonstration you can provide of the importance of understanding the learners with whom your trainees will work—their environment, their needs, their learning objectives, and their resources for meeting these objectives—is, of course, to show that you understand the trainees with whom *you* are working. Let them see that you are taking into account their objectives, including their need to increase their skill in assessing the needs of others. If you can do this, then they will find the activities in this section useful.

There is an additional tightrope you must walk. While it is important to respect your trainees' knowledge and experience, you will also have to allow for a situation that we have seen emerge again and again: when trainees are university-trained and city-oriented, their perceptions of the needs of rural or urban disadvantaged people, even within their own community, are often seriously skewed. They sometimes find it hard to believe that those they see as "poor," "ignorant," and "unsophisticated" know anything useful. They often want to prescribe what these persons should learn, rather than rely on the learners' data about their own situation.

Some of the activities in this section will help break through such attitudes. They stress not only the need for firsthand data but also the fact that outsiders tend to see the deprivations rather than the positive strengths and abilities of villagers or inner city people as their most significant characterisric.

Finally, there is another factor related to needs assessment that we must think about. Those of us in the so-called "helping professions" are sometimes accused of ascribing needs or problems to those whom we seek to help and then of developing programs in response to the needs we think we see. This allegation touches a particularly sensitive issue because our role as "helpers" is dependent upon the needs we are responsible for diagnosing. The contradiction involved can probably never be entirely eliminated. There is always a strong tendency to respond in terms of one's own skills. Trainers, consultants, and community workers who know themselves, however, and who become skilled in understanding the concrete circumstances of learners' lives, can find ways to take the learners' objectives as their starting point.

Self-Awareness: Analyzing Goals

TIME: 45 minutes

The trainer was starting a materials development workshop. She wanted to demonstrate the necessity of checking with the learners themselves before developing materials for them to use. She also wanted to make the trainees aware of the importance of knowing and expressing their own feelings without projecting them on others.

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Paper (2 sheets for each participant) and pencils

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Remind the trainees that their aspirations may not be the same as those of the adults for whom they will be preparing learning materials. Explain that this activity is meant to help them identify some of their own objectives and imagine how others may see themselves.

STEP 2–Distribute paper and pencils and ask each participant to draw a vertical line to divide each sheet of paper in two.

STEP 3–Have them write five phrases describing their own present life situation on the left-hand side.

STEP 4–Then have them write five phrases on the right-hand side describing how they would like their lives to be five years from now.

STEP 5–Ask participants to imagine themselves in the future situations they have described on the right side of the paper. Introduce questions to stimulate thought, such as:

- What changes would be needed to attain these goals?
- How much difference is there between the old situation and the new?
- Is it hard to feel yourself the person you have described?

STEP 6–Ask them to think about the group for whom they will be preparing learning materials and especially about someone they know in that group. Then have them fill in the left-hand side of the second sheet of paper as though they were that person describing his or her present life situation.

STEP 7–Have them write five phrases on the right-hand side of the paper describing the life situation that person might hope for five years from now.

STEP 8–Suggest that they discuss how they felt as they did each half of the activity. Introduce questions for discussion:

- Was it harder to do the second half of the activity than the first? Why?
- Do we know what differences there are between the aspirations of city dwellers and villagers? of highly educated and less educated people? of ourselves and the learning group? How do we know what the differences are? Could we be wrong? How could we find out?

WHAT HAPPENED

Participants had all kinds of different ideas here. The activity helped bring home how hard it is to share the viewpoint of people whose situations and experiences are very different from our own. Participants became aware that they needed to get first-hand information from the learners themselves about their own ideas, hopes, questions, frustrations. The trainees suggested that a variant of this same exercise could be used rather than direct questioning to gain information about those for whom they would be preparing learning materials.

Designed and used by Lyra Srinivasan in the Philippines.

Learners As Individuals

TIME: 1½ hrs.

"It was the second day of a workshop for village workers. Several remarks made during the first day's discussion indicated the need for the trainees to reflect on ways in which they perceived the impoverished rural people with whom they would be working. We hoped that this two-part activity would help them to examine their negative perceptions, to explore how these perceptions might impede their work in the villages and, as a final step, to consider ways of relating more effectively to the villagers, not as a stereotyped group, but as individuals with unique strengths and abilities."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

A photograph of a culturally relevant scene with people engaged in some familiar activity

Paper (two sheets for each participant) and pencils

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pen

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Part I

STEP 1–Ask the participants to study the photograph.

STEP 2–Give each participant two sheets of paper.
Ask them not to sign their names, but to list 3 words or phrases that, *in general*, describe personal characteristics of the people with whom they work, e.g., shy, stubborn, friendly. (To avoid influencing responses, do not give any example words that might pertain to the particular photograph.)

STEP 3–Ask a member of the group to collect the unsigned lists.

Part II

STEP 4–Ask the trainees to think of one specific villager whom they know personally. Then ask them to list, on the second unsigned sheet, three words or phrases that characterize this villager.

STEP 5–Appoint a second member of the group to collect the second set of lists.

STEP 6–Ask the trainee who has collected the first set of lists (general characteristics) to read them aloud. Write these words on the blackboard or newsprint sheet. List *all* responses, even if this means repeating a word that appears on more than one list.

STEP 7–Have participants look at each characteristic listed on the newsprint sheet and decide, as a group, if it is positive (+), negative

(–), or neutral (0) when related to the needs of community development. Mark a +, –, or 0, next to each word or phrase and total the number of positive, negative, and neutral characteristics separately.

STEP 8–Ask the trainee who collected the second set of lists (specific characteristics) to read them aloud and follow the procedure outlined in Steps 6 and 7.

STEP 9–Have the group discuss the differences between the total number of positive, negative, and neutral characteristics in the two lists.

Note: This activity does not work well when participants are told beforehand that they will be analyzing their own responses in terms of negative and positive characteristics. If both lists–general (Step 2), and specific (Step 4)–show a similar number of negative characteristics, you might ask:

- Do all villagers have these negative characteristics?
- Are there some good reasons why villagers behave in these ways?

Discussing these questions may help the group understand why villagers behave the way they do in certain situations.

Very positive lists indicate that the trainees hold very positive attitudes towards villagers. This will make them more effective in their work. If your group is more "plus" than "minus," discuss the value of this with them.

WHAT HAPPENED

Part I stimulated much discussion about categorizing characteristics. For instance, some felt that "reserved" and "humble" were positive characteristics. Others disagreed. "Angry" was seen as positive in some subcultures, while others saw it as negative.

Participants enjoyed Part I of the activity, and their enthusiasm carried over into Part II, leading to animated discussion. They were interested to note that they ascribed more positive characteristics to villagers they know personally than to villagers in general.

Adapted from Lyra Srinivasan and field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.

Assessing Learners' Needs

TIME: 1½ hrs.

The trainer was working with a leadership group, university-trained but lacking extensive field experience. He felt the group needed to understand the difference between perceived *needs (what the group* thinks *villagers need) and* felt *needs (what villagers themselves say they need). He hoped that a poignant, participatory experience might help the group see that facilitators have as much to learn from villagers as villagers have to learn from them. Perhaps the group would ask, "Who is really the* expert *in the development of learning experiences?"*

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Paper and pencils (enough for each participant)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Ask the group to discuss the following questions:

- To what extent do you think villagers are aware of their problems?
- If they are not aware of some problems, then are these problems real?
- What does it mean to say someone has a problem but isn't aware of it?
- Who determines when a problem is a *real* problem?

STEP 2–Set up a role-play situation between two individuals or two subgroups, one representing villagers, the other representing urbanized development workers. The job of the development workers is to explain to the villagers what they (the development workers) think the villagers' main problems are and how they might be solved. The villagers should respond to these ideas and suggestions, offering their own analysis of their problems.

The process is then reversed: the villagers explain what they think are the main problems in urban areas and how they might be solved. The development workers respond.

STEP 3–Ask group members who are not involved in the role playing to be observers. Divide these observers into two groups, one to record the views of the villagers, the other to record the views of the development workers.

STEP 4–After the role playing is finished, ask the entire group to discuss what they have learned about themselves and their attitudes towards villagers.

STEP 5–Ask each observer-group to read its list of ideas, those expressed by the "villagers," and those expressed by the "development

workers." Ask them to discuss what they have learned about *real* villagers from this activity. What would they have to do to really understand villagers' attitudes?

WHAT HAPPENED

Those who were playing the role of development workers tended to restate problems already identified in a rural baseline survey. The "villagers" rejected a number of these problems, especially the accusation that they had too many children.

Interestingly, the "villagers" listed several problems that were not mentioned by the "development workers": loss of food to the urban areas, excess of wealth concentrated in urban areas, and the ineptitude of the government. Only one problem—government ineptitude—was shared by both groups.

The trainees, who initially felt that their job was to "tell villagers what problems they have and how to solve them," came to realize that they themselves had problems, and more significantly, that they, as urban dwellers, were in fact the cause of several problems felt by the villagers. They began to suspect that they had as much to learn from the villagers as the villagers had to learn from them. They realized that they would have to spend time in the rural areas to really identify the villagers' felt needs. They also agreed that a "problem" is best understood by the person who has the problem.

BRAC

Developed by Leon Clark and used in a three-week materials development workshop with staff of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee.

Understanding Others

TIME: 1 hr.

"I wanted this group of trainees to come to terms with the difficulties inherent in understanding and relating to persons whose frame of reference and experience is far removed from their own. By using photographs, I hoped that participants would be stimulated to explore their feelings more deeply, moving a step further in their capacity to empathize and identify with others with whom they would work."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

A selection of photographs from around the world (at least twice as many pictures as participants) showing adults—working, playing, resting—in a variety of settings, both rural and urban. Most pictures should indicate a social and economic level similar to that of the group with whom the trainees will be working.

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Ask the group to examine the pictures and try to imagine what a person in the scene is doing and feeling.

STEP 2–Ask each participant to select a photograph and then to choose one person in the picture and try to enter into that person's life.

STEP 3–Tell the group that at the end of 15 minutes they will be asked to show their picture and to relate a story or incident in the first person, as though they were the person in the picture.

STEP 4–Ask the participants to listen to each other's stories and then to reflect on the experience.

WHAT HAPPENED

The stories told were generally sad, desperate, or even tragic. It was clear that the poverty reflected in the photographs I had chosen seemed such an overriding factor that it crowded out other things that the persons in the pictures might have known or felt. During the period of reflection, the participants pointed out that they could not really "get inside" the person they were portraying. They recognized their own projections, and saw that preconceived ideas and feelings would make it more difficult to collect and evaluate real data. I felt that the group was then prepared to consider how they would go about framing questions and making observations to learn true facts about the lives and needs of others.

Used by Carman Hunter in New York City.

One Problem, Two Views

TIME: ½ hr.

"The workshop was underway and we felt that the group had a good conceptual grasp of the problems that rural people face. We wanted to take the participants to the next level, that is, to be able to empathize with others, and to respect their difficulties and frustrations."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

None

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Explain that the purpose of this activity is to gain a fuller understanding of some of the problems that rural women face everyday, and to experience how they might feel when they cannot find help with these problems.

STEP 2–Ask the trainees to close their eyes and imagine that they have a son who has burned his hand so badly that he needs medical attention. Describe this event vividly, asking participants to create a mental image of the situation. How would they *feel* if such an event occurred? What would they do? Encourage an exchange of responses.

STEP 3–Ask group members to close their eyes again and imagine being a mother living in a village far away from the city. Again, the woman's son has burned his hand badly. But this time, there is no clinic, hospital, nurse, or doctor nearby.

STEP 3–Encourage the trainees to keep their eyes closed and describe how they *feel*. Then ask, "How would you handle this problem if you were this woman?"

WHAT HAPPENED

Trainees saw that a problem that in their experience could be dealt with relatively easily, might be baffling and even terrifying to a rural woman. This recognition highlighted a discussion of the difficulty and the importance of trying to understand the problems and frustrations of everyday life from the villagers' own points of view.

Field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.

Learners As Experts

TIME: 1½ hrs.

The group of materials developers would be going out to the field to learn more about those with whom they would be working. This group did have some previous knowledge about the area and its people. The trainer thought a structured, participatory activity would alert them to what they still needed to learn from the villagers, and how they might go about learning it.

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Paper and pencils
Newsprint and felt pens
Transparent tape

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Part I

STEP 1–Give each participant paper and pencil.

STEP 2–Ask each person to make a list in answer to the following question: What would you need to know *from* or *about* learners in order to create problem-solving materials? (Allow 15 minutes.)

STEP 3–Have the participants divide into small groups. Distribute the felt pens. Have each of these groups gather around one blank sheet of newsprint taped to the wall and produce a consensus list by combining and discussing their individual list. (Allow 20 minutes.)

STEP 4–Have the entire group produce an overall consensus list by combining the small-group lists. Assign someone from the group to actually write the list. (Allow 20 minutes.) A master list will thus be produced.

STEP 5–Allow about 10 minutes for discussion, comments, and revision.

Note: The group's master list looked something like this:

We would need to know:
- –current practices
- –needs
- –level of knowledge
- –interests
- –traditions and customs
- –working vocabulary
- –problems of daily life
- –religious and cultural norms

Part II

Note: This part of the activity should be fun, capitalizing on the suspense of producing the chart column by column. Allow for "table talk" between individuals, but remind everyone to be honest in evaluating his or her *own* knowledge.

STEP 6–Distribute additional paper, if necessary. Ask each person to rule the paper into five columns, and to copy the overall consensus list produced in Part 1 in column #1.

STEP 7–Ask each person to head column #2 "I know . . . ," and next to each item in column #1 to write one of the following phrases: "a lot," "a little," or "almost nothing."

STEP 8–Have them head column #3 "How I know. . . ." Next to each item, ask each person to write the appropriate response: reading and study, observation, investigation (surveys and interviews), personal experience.

STEP 9–Have everyone head column #4 "I would like to know more about . . ." and put a check mark next to the appropriate items.

STEP 10–Have everyone head column #5 "How I could find out. . . ." Next to each item checked in column #4, ask each individual to write how he or she could begin to investigate the topic he or she wants to know more about.

STEP 11–Conduct a 10-minute large group discussion about how the group felt about the exercise.

WHAT HAPPENED

The ultimate purpose of this exercise was to find out what information still needed to be gathered before the materials development process could begin. Since the group of trainees contained both field level workers and other participants, there were variations in knowledge about prospective learners. If this discrepancy surfaces, the trainer should try to avoid making any group members feel that they have nothing to contribute to the project.

Developed by Leon Clark and used with staff of the People's Open University in Pakistan.

THAWORN PHATINAWIN

A Village Profile

TIME: 1 hr.

"We introduced this activity to enable the group to identify important facts they should know about the rural people with whom they work, and how they can collect the information they need to develop effective learning experiences."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pen
Paper and pencils (enough for each participant)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Ask the trainees to think about the people with whom they work. What do they know about these people?

STEP 2–Ask participants to choose one village in which they work and write down their responses to the following questions:

- What is the population of the community?
- What are the ages of the people with whom you work?
- What are their religions?

- At what level do most of them read?
- What are their occupations?
- How much schooling have they had?
- How many children do most families have?
- What are their most important customs?
- What are their daily activities?
- When are they available for meetings?
- Where do they meet for informal conversation?
- What other important facts should we know about them?
- If you do not have some of this information, how would you go about getting it?

STEP 3–List the answers to these questions on the newsprint or blackboard and suggest that participants add information they may have omitted to their own lists.

STEP 4–Ask the group why it is important to collect such information.

WHAT HAPPENED

The answers given provided a basis for understanding the situation in the community. The group later was able to check the answers generated in this activity against the actual facts.

Field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.

Verifying Interests

TIME: ½ hr.

"We wanted to help the group develop learning experiences that would focus on the problems and interests of community residents. To do this, trainees needed to check their own perceptions to see if they were similar to those of the people with whom they work. We thought this activity might demonstrate how hard it is to guess what someone else's interests really are and how easy it is to make mistakes when assumptions are made."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Paper and pencils

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Note: This activity is recommended for use with a group that has met several times.

STEP 1–Divide the participants into two equal groups, *A* and *B*. Then, ask each member of *Group A* to choose a partner from *Group B*.

STEP 2–Tell the partner-pairs that they must not speak to each other. Ask them to list the three things they think their partner is most interested in and to rank these in order of importance to their partner. Then have them list their own real interests.

Note: To make this activity livelier, ask *Group A* and *B* to form lines with partner-pairs facing each other.

STEP 3–Make sure that all lists of both groups are finished. Then ask a member of *Group A* to read aloud the list describing his or her partner's imagined interests. Next, the partner from *Group B* reads aloud his or her own list of actual interests. Follow this procedure with all the partner-pairs.

STEP 4–Invite discussion of the following questions after all the trainees have read their lists aloud:

- Did any member of *Group A* identify the major interests of his or her partner correctly or almost correctly? If so, how do you think this was possible?

  (Answers might be: "The partners knew each other well," "He overheard conversations," "She had observed her partner in various situations.")

- Why do you think some of you did not identify the interests of your partners correctly?

  (Help the trainees to realize that even though they know someone, they may still be unaware of that person's real interests or concerns unless special effort is made to learn them.)

- Do you think that members of *Group A* would have identified the major interests of their partners more correctly if they had been able to talk to them before writing their answer lists?

  (During the discussion, emphasize the idea that *one of the best ways to know someone's real interests is to talk directly to that person.*)

STEP 5–Ask the group to consider and discuss the following questions:

- Do you think that if the people with whom you work had the opportunity to list their major problems in order of importance, their lists would be different from the ones you expected them to make?
- Do you think you would find it helpful to talk to community residents before listing what you think might be their major problems?

WHAT HAPPENED

Our group members discovered they could be mistaken even when they thought they knew a person's interests quite well. It followed that they were even more likely to be mistaken about the needs and problems of the community residents, about whom they knew very little. The activity helped the trainees to see the importance of verifying their perceptions of people's interests and problems with the people themselves. We all agreed that we would probably have more success in our work with community residents if we first tackled problems *they* saw as important.

Field-tested in Thailand by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark.

Problem/Resource Analysis

TIME: 1½ hrs.

"I was working with a group of men and women farmers who were community leaders. They were all from the same area and they knew each other but they never before had compared their perceptions of village problems. I wanted to introduce them to a brainstorming technique for problem solving and, in the process, to create a sense of group unity."

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pen

Paper and pencils (enough for each participant)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Have the participants identify the three most important problems facing them. This can be done by asking each participant to write down on a piece of paper his or her three most pressing problems and read these aloud to the group. The participants may wish instead to call out their answers for the facilitator to write down.

STEP 2–Copy the table below onto the blackboard or newsprint:

PROBLEM	AGAINST	FOR	GOAL

Under *Problem,* list one most pressing problem facing the participants. Under *Goal,* write the solution perceived by the participants.

STEP 3–Ask the participants to list all of the things preventing them from solving their problem. These should be listed in the *Against* column. Next, have them list all the things working *For* the solution of the problem. It is then up to the facilitator to show specifically how the activities in the *For* column can overcome things in the *Against* column and aid the participants in achieving their goals.

STEP 4–Repeat the process with the other two major problems perceived by the participants.

WHAT HAPPENED

The participants were really excited, both to realize that other people felt the same way about problems facing them and to see a longer list in the *For* column than in the *Against* column. They suddenly recognized that they had many resources they had never been aware of before. And they were delighted to discover that they could use those resources to solve their own problems.

Used by Bill Murphy in village seminars in Tanzania.

Collecting Information

TIME: 45 minutes

"The group would be returning to the villages after they had gathered some initial data about villagers' needs. We wanted them to explore different ways of verifying the problems they had attributed to rural families as well as ways to determine if villagers would indeed be interested in trying to solve those problems. We introduced this activity to help the group members discover whether their perceptions of villagers' problems matched the villagers' own priorities, and if not, to work to establish an accurate list of those priorities."

ED CLARK

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens
List of villagers' needs and problems gathered thus far

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Ask trainees to refer to their lists of villagers' needs and problems gathered thus far.

STEP 2–Ask how they can verify that these are indeed important problems and needs.

Have trainees, working alone, make a specific list or outline of how they will verify that this is a problem, when they return to the field.

STEP 3–After participants have had time to develop their lists or outlines, ask one or two to write their outlines on the blackboard or tell what they intend to do.

STEP 4–Ask the group to supply missing ideas, and have them added to the lists.

WHAT HAPPENED

The group developed the following lists of techniques and strategies for verifying problems:

- Visit and talk with village leaders—the chief, captain or headman, school teacher, midwife, religious leaders, and others the families look to for advice or assistance in times of need.
- Talk to community residents, wherever they happen to be. Learn the local customs and the ways to visit or be invited into the home.
- Observe the routines of the community, the clothes people wear, the things they talk about, the food they eat, the number of children they have, the condition of their houses, the radio programs they listen to, the health of their children, and so forth.
- Hold a meeting with local women to introduce yourself and the agency you represent. Ask what they consider their most important problems and have them arrange these in order of importance. Ask what you can do to help with their problems.

Field-tested in Thailand by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark.

Interviewing–Good and Bad

TIME: 45 minutes

"During discussions in the workshop, it became clear that although participants understood the various kinds of information needed, they were still not sure how to obtain them. This suggested that an activity demonstrating particular data collection methods would be useful."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS (optional)

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens
Paper and pencils

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Stage a demonstration of a poorly conducted interview. The interviewer should be primed beforehand to use all the wrong interview techniques.

Note: A staged "bad" interview might include the following:

- not explaining purpose of interview
- constantly interrupting when interviewee is speaking
- writing down answers while ignoring the interviewee
- disinterest (use body language)
- appearing hurried
- passing judgment on what interviewee says
- refusing to restate a question when asked

The person chosen to demonstrate the "bad" interview should be either a strong member of the planning committee or a participant who understands the purpose of the activity beforehand and is prepared to accept criticism.

STEP 2–Encourage trainees to describe the interview techniques used that they think were faulty. Have a volunteer list these on newsprint or on the blackboard.

STEP 3–Ask a volunteer to stage a good interview, this time using as many proper interview techniques as possible. (They should be helped by a new awareness of the bad techniques discussed and listed on the newsprint or on the blackboard.)

Note: A staged "good" interview might include:

- making clear the purposes of the interview
- establishing a positive atmosphere–showing interest in whatever is said without passing judgment.

- acting flexibly by restating or clarifying questions if called upon to do so
- being a good listener and observer of what is being communicated either verbally or silently through body language
- finding time for a brief conversation with interviewee at the end of interview

The person chosen to stage the "good" interview should be someone who is experienced in conducting interviews effectively.

STEP 4–Engage the group in another discussion following the role-play in Step 3. Ask them to identify differences between the first "bad" interview and the second "good" interview. Focus on the interview schedule itself, the kind of questions asked, the reasons for the questions, and the purpose of the whole activity.

WHAT HAPPENED

Participants caught on very well and used the criticisms and suggestions made by the group about the first staged interview to correct their techniques for the second interview. They became thoroughly involved and enjoyed this activity immensely.

Used by Abeba Wolderufael and Noreen Clark with staff of the Ethiopian Women's Association.

Interviewing Techniques

TIME: 1½ to 2 hrs.

"We were working with a group of curriculum designers. So that their learning methods and materials could be more closely related to actual needs and interests of potential learners, we wanted them to be familiar with some of the interviewing techniques that have proved effective."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Paper and pencils

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Remind participants that individual interviews are a useful way of acquiring information about a potential learning group. In this activity they will examine and compare two interviewing techniques.

STEP 2–Explain that the first technique consists of asking the subject to recall the incidents, the high and low points, of a single day in his or her life. Explain that this "24-hour recall," properly employed, can give a picture not only of typical and atypical incidents but of what is important to the interviewee.

STEP 3–Emphasize that the effectiveness of the "24-hour recall" is dependent on the extent to which the interviewer gets details about the way the person spent his or her time. The questions are merely "What time did you get up? Then what did you do? And after that?" and so forth until the day is accounted for.

STEP 4–Have volunteers role-play a "24-hour recall" interview. The interview can describe actual events or be imaginary.

STEP 5–Without, at this point, discussing results of the role-playing, explain that a second effective interview technique consists of asking projective questions such as, "What are your neighbors' major problems?" "How would you like your children's lives to differ from your own?" "Do you have a dream for the future? What is it?"–and so forth. Explain that this "projective question" technique can yield an overall view of a community's problems and interests, as well as revealing the preoccupations and hopes of the individual.

STEP 6–Ask the group to suggest other examples of appropriate "projective" questions.

STEP 7–Ask for volunteers to role-play a "projective question" interview.

STEP 8–Lead the group in a discussion of the two interviewing techniques. Topics should include:

- a critique and comparison of the two interviews
- suggestions for improvement
- circumstances in which each of these two techniques could be used most successfully
- what should and should not be done in an interview

WHAT HAPPENED

A discussion with this group yielded these suggestions:

- Gain the informant's trust by being honest about the purpose of your questioning. Stress that in any use of information, the interviewee will remain anonymous, ensuring total confidentiality.
- Select an informal, nonthreatening environment.
- Be an acute listener, performing a clarifying and probing role.
- Be non-judgmental, positive, and all-accepting of an individual's responses. You are not there to comment or give advice, but to listen and respond.
- Always probe into the "why" of things, but be sensitive to territory a person does not want to enter in discussion. Back off, do not confront.
- Record things as they are said with direct quotes. Do not let your mind work them over into something you want to hear. Try to record the information as accurately as possible.

Used by Nat Colletta and Noreen Clark in New York State.

BRAC

SECTION THREE:

Choosing Appropriate Methods and Techniques

This section includes a range of methods and techniques that invite maximum participation by members of a learning group. If you want only to introduce your trainees to a wide variety of methods, you can simply use them in sequence, inviting trainees to reflect on each exercise and its usefulness and possible application in their own work.

Or you might want to use the exercises in this section in another way—a way that, we believe, will make it easier for your trainees to use the exercises in their own teaching situations: You can adapt particular techniques described in this section to any stage of the training process—needs assessment; planning; the actual learning of information, or ideas; or assessment. "Brainstorming," for instance, is described in this section. Instead of introducing it simply as a technique to generate discussion, you could use it as a way to conduct needs assessment among the trainees by focusing on their workshop expectations.

Any of the techniques described here can be used in helping your trainees not merely to learn *about* a method that they might apply but to use the particular method or technique as they learn something else. And while they reflect on the experience, they can relate it to their own learning task and consider how the method helped in the accomplishment of that task.

Behavior Models

TIME: ½ hr.

"It seemed to be time for some discussion about the differences of leadership or teaching styles and how they can be applied in specific learning situations. I especially wanted the group to see the differences between group discussion and the more traditional lecture style of teaching."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Two sets of figures drawn on a blackboard or newsprint

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Ask the group to look at the figures here and consider these questions:

- What is happening in each situation?
- Who is the teacher in each situation ?
- What is the pattern of communication?
- Have the group describe content and learning objectives that might require each of these approaches.

STEP 2–Get responses from the group to the above questions, building on the participants' ideas as they offer them. Help them to see that both illustrations can represent learning situations. Neither is "right" or "wrong," merely more or less appropriate for differing objectives and content. The first may be better when presenting background information needed by the whole group, for giving a demonstration, or explaining directions for an activity. The second drawing illustrates a setting that encourages two-way communication: participants are freer here to share information and to discuss a subject. The leader becomes a learner on an equal footing with everyone else.

KARLA KAYNEE

WHAT HAPPENED

In this exercise, I sat in a circle with the trainees. Someone finally noticed this and pointed out that in this setting they all felt free to offer their ideas. A long discussion ensued on what makes adult learners feel confident and encourages them to express their thoughts. The group concluded that because adults tend to associate learning with schooling, facilitators have to work extra hard to show, by their own behavior, that solving problems and planning actions depend on the ideas and experiences of all participants.

Used by Catherine D. Crone in Kenya.

Overview: Teaching Techniques

TIME: 45 minutes

"I introduced this exercise early in the workshop, hoping to discover the range of teaching techniques with which participants were familiar. I also wanted to suggest that there is a wider variety of available techniques than most teachers or leaders generally assume and to help participants choose methods appropriate for learners in particular situations."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens
Pencils and paper

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Explain that all of us have a range of teaching methods and tools available to us. Certain groups of learners will respond better to some techniques than to others. Some tools are more appropriate for achieving certain objectives than others. Ask the trainees to think about specific learners with whom they have worked and to describe techniques that have been successful. List these on the board or newsprint and encourage individual comments about how and why the techniques worked. Questions and a free exchange of ideas and experiences with different techniques should follow.

STEP 2–Use an example–building a house or planting a particular crop–to make the point that different tools or implements are needed for each part of the task. Engage the group in supplying information on which tools are used to do what. Suggest that the person who is planning an educational activity has to make similar choices.

STEP 3–Ask participants to suggest appropriate teaching methods in each of the following categories in an educational plan: to stimulate interest, to get discussion going, to share information, to build skills.

Note: Ideas suggested may include using methods like the following:

TO STIMULATE INTEREST

Displays or exhibits
Trips
Demonstrations
Role-plays
Problem dramas
Radio
Audio-visuals
Posters
Flip charts
Flash cards

TO GET DISCUSSION GOING

Questions
Role-plays
Problem dramas
Pictures
Brainstorming

TO SHARE INFORMATION

Film
Radio, TV
Pamphlets
Flip charts
Newsletters
Talks
Self-study
Home visits

TO BUILD SKILLS

Demonstrations
Field trips
Workshop/practice
Individual instruction

WHAT HAPPENED

Many of the techniques suggested were new to some of the members of the group and they asked for training during the workshop so they could all understand and use each of them.

Used by Vicki Semler in a materials production workshop in Ghana.

Leading a Discussion

TIME: 2 hrs.

"We were almost at midpoint in a three-week workshop. Realizing that conducting a lively discussion—one in which everyone becomes involved —is an important tool of the trainer's trade, we suggested a session on 'discussion techniques,' followed by actual practice in leading a small-group discussion."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

4" x 5" index cards or paper slips, each with a lively discussion topic written on it

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Explain in your own words, using newsprint to note major points, that a lively discussion, where ideas and opinions are exchanged, is always a way of learning from others. A discussion helps:

- people to talk about and consider new ideas
- the group to work together in finding solutions
- the discussion leader to learn the ideas and feelings of others

STEP 2–Ask the participants, "What is the role of the discussion leader?" Encourage discussion about the question and write the responses on the blackboard or newsprint.

Note: Help your group to discover for themselves that a discussion leader *guides* the discussion and *keeps it going* by knowing the subject well, through quiet encouragement, and without forcing opinions on the group. The discussion leader helps the group to look at the problem posed, discuss its causes and possible solutions, and consider ways of selecting and bringing about the best solution.

STEP 3–Distribute the discussion topic (see materials), or let trainees select another topic of particular personal interest.

STEP 4–Divide the large group into subgroups of five or six persons, and call for a volunteer in each group to be the first to lead a five- or six-minute discussion of the topics that were distributed. (Each subgroup member should have a turn at being the discussion leader.)

STEP 5–Return to the large-group format and once again ask, "What is the role of a discussion leader?" (Help them in their search for answers that best apply to their own experience.) Allowing am-

ple time for answers, ask the following questions:

- What kind of behavior on the part of the discussion leader motivates active participation?
- What should the discussion leader do if:

  members of the group have conflicting views?

  sensitive issues are raised?
- How can the discussion leader:

  encourage quiet people to participate?

  keep one person from talking too often?

  build questions based on responses?

  keep discussion focused on the topic?

Note: If participants do not bring up the following important points, you may wish to suggest them yourself: a discussion leader should avoid doing all the talking, should ask questions, should introduce new ideas if discussion stops, lags, or begins to repeat itself. If two or more members begin to argue, the leader might quickly direct a question to an uninvolved member of the group, or introduce a new idea. The leader should acknowledge differing viewpoints and introduce facts that help to clarify them. The leader should be alert to sensitive issues. If discussion of the issue seems inappropriate at the time, the leader might say, "If anyone is interested, this can be discussed after the meeting."

STEP 6–Summarize by reviewing the role of a discussion leader.

WHAT HAPPENED

We had tried to write provocative statements as suggested discussion topics on the slips that each group received. (Examples: "Sickness is a form of punishment." "Nobody ever learns from experience." "Women must always obey their husbands.") About half the group used these topics and the rest supplied their own. People spent a lot of time in the reporting session describing their own difficulties on other occasions in keeping a group on the topic. They felt it was easier in this practice session than it would be working with unknown people in a "real" situation. A lot of uneasiness about the method surfaced. We had to get into the whole issue of the value of nonformal education and learner-centered approaches again. The exercise served as a means of facing things that were bothering the group and it was followed by actual practice in leading a discussion.

Field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.

Stimulating Questions

TIME: 2 hrs.

"Almost any technique—pictures, games, problem dramas, etc.—is only as effective as the questions and discussions that occur along with it. That is why, before giving our group a chance to experience these techniques, we introduced this activity. We wanted to give the group concrete experience with the way different types of questions can be used to help people express their ideas and become interested and involved."

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1—Explain to participants, in your own words, that a good facilitator or group leader makes the learners feel relaxed and happy to be at the group meeting. The leader welcomes each person, asks about their children, and talks about local events while waiting for others to arrive. After showing pictures, or at the end of a problem drama or game, questions can help group members think about important points and talk about their ideas. Different kinds of questions have different purposes. A good mix will usually lead to a good group discussion. Three kinds of questions will be considered: *closed* questions, *open* questions, and *redirected* questions.

STEP 2—Write the three kinds of questions on the newsprint or blackboard as headings, allowing space under each for sample questions to be written in later.

Note: A *closed* question calls for a brief, exact reply. The advantages are that it can focus discussion on a specific point, can help the teacher or facilitator check whether or not the group understands the content and agrees with content ideas. If the participants do not agree—or do not know the correct answer—additional teaching of content must be planned. The disadvantage of a closed question is that it may limit discussion by discouraging expression of attitudes related to the topic.

An *open* question allows for several different, and often lengthy, answers. The advantage of an open question is that it stimulates thought and makes people want to give opinions. It is a good way of getting ideas out in the open for the group to discuss. An open question, however, may not work as a discussion starter with people who are not used to expressing their opinions freely in a group.

A *redirected* question focuses attention away from the teacher or fa-

cilitator and returns the responsibility of problem solving to the group. When the leader is asked a question it is sometimes a good idea to ask someone else in the group to answer it. A disadvantage of this technique is that the person to whom the leader redirects the question may not be prepared to answer it. Discomfort is a more likely result when the redirected question is also a *closed* one that demands a factual answer.

STEP 3–Write an example of a *closed* question under its heading, such as, "When should a mother start feeding her baby small amounts of soft porridge?"

Ask participants to discuss and define a *closed* question, and encourage them to suggest ways of handling reactions to it. Consider its advantages, disadvantages, and when it should be used.

Ask for examples of *closed* questions and add these to the list under your own example.

STEP 4–Write an example of an *open* question, such as, "What should a wife do about her mother-in-law's strong wish to have more grandchildren?"

Invite a trainee to lead the group in discussing the example. After a few minutes' discussion about the example ask for other examples of an *open* question and add these to the list.

STEP 5–Write an example of a *redirected* question, such as, "Mrs. Shinn says her whole family drinks water from the stream without getting sick. She is asking why she must boil the stream water for her baby. That's a good question. What do you think, Mrs. Lee?" Continue as in Steps 3 and 4.

WHAT HAPPENED

After some initial difficulty with the difference between open and closed questions the participants became intrigued by the idea and a lively competition in question posing ensued.

Field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.

Brainstorming

TIME: 45 minutes

"Each member of this group had different ideas of what education was all about: its purpose, content, methods, and the appropriate roles of teachers and learners. I wanted to give everyone a chance to express thoughts on the subject so that the group could agree on a working definition."

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Explain the ground rules for brainstorming:

- Don't criticize during the brainstorming.
- Don't alter or edit the ideas; take them just as they come.
- Encourage farfetched ideas; they may trigger more practical ones.
- The more ideas the better.

STEP 2–Ask trainees what words they think of when they hear the word *education*. Have a volunteer write all the words the group suggests. (Use the blackboard or newsprint for this purpose.) Call a halt only after the group seems to have run out of word ideas.

STEP 3–Review the list together, crossing out words that the group agrees do not fit.

STEP 4–Seek some kind of consensus on key words, explaining that these words will become the basis for a group definition to be developed later.

WHAT HAPPENED

On the basis of this initial brainstorming, I was able to organize a further activity using dictionaries, which led to development of an agreed-upon definition of education. In my view, the advantage of brainstorming was that the basic ideas to be used later came from and belonged to the participants. These were not given to the trainees, but represented their own thinking.

Note: Brainstorming is widely used by trainers. In Bangladesh, a group about to embark on a workshop in materials development was asked to brainstorm activities of villagers that might be used as part of an educational program. Games, puzzles, folktales, etc., were listed, and the group quickly reached consensus on which were the most appropriate

for use in learning materials, and began to develop these.

In a training session in Thailand, a consultant asked participants to brainstorm ways to reduce the dropout rate in literacy classes. The diverse ideas that were suggested proved useful later to program administrators.

PATRICIA HUNTINGTON

Used by Fredrica Teer in New York.

Communicating Ideas

TIME: 1 hr.

The trainers were working with a group involved in a rural development project. Group members were content specialists and trainers whose backgrounds were extremely diverse. The trainers introduced this activity to make the group aware of the way differences in perception and expression can distort and retard communication. It was hoped that, with this in mind during their work together, they would find ways to communicate clearly and avoid ambiguity and so to function better as a team.

SETTING

A large enough meeting room with a door

MATERIALS

A photo or drawing (clear visual message that is culturally relevant)

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

Three identity cards (numbered *1*, *2* and *3*)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Explain the activity as follows:

"Three of you will be asked to volunteer to be *Persons 1*, *2* and *3*. You will leave the room and wait to be called back in, in turn. While you are out of the room the other members of the group will study a picture, decide together how to describe it to *Person 1*, and appoint someone to speak for the group. *Person 1* will be invited to return to the room, stand with the reporter in front of the group, and listen to the description of the picture. *Person 1* will not actually *see* the picture, and will not be able to take notes, draw a picture, or ask any questions. The reporter can repeat the description a second time, if *Person 1* asks for it.

"Following the same rules, *Person 1* will describe the picture to *Person 2*, who will describe it to *Person 3*. *Person 3* must follow the same rules as the others, but, when ready, will draw a picture of what he or she thinks *Person 2* described."

STEP 2–Ask for three volunteers and give each one a card–1, 2 or 3. Ask all of them to leave the room.

STEP 3–Show the remaining members of the group the picture. Give them up to five minutes to decide how it can be described and to choose a reporter. Put away the picture.

STEP 4–Invite *Person 1* back into the room and restate the s that

apply. Have the reporter describe the picture–twice, if requested by *Person 1*.

STEP 5–Ask *Person 1* to describe the picture to *Person 2*, following the same rules.

STEP 6–Ask *Person 2* to describe the picture to *Person 3*, following the same rules. *Person 3* will then draw the picture described on the newsprint sheet or blackboard available for this purpose.

STEP 7–Show the original picture once again, and have the group compare it with *Person 3*'s drawing.

STEP 8–Engage the group in a discussion: Did the picture description change from person to person? How? Why? What do you think was the purpose of this activity?

WHAT HAPPENED

The group responded enthusiastically. Questions about the activity's purpose and the general message on communication and perception led to a lively discussion. Everyone got the idea that messages tend to become altered, garbled, and confused. They were able to relate this experience to the possibility of problems of communication occurring in their own projects and to examine how such problems might be avoided.

Used by Sean Tate in the Philippines.

Setting the Tone for Learning

TIME: 1 hr.

The trainer sets the tone of any learning experience by using certain techniques that help or hinder participation. This activity was planned so workshop groups could analyze some of these techniques and understand what occurs when techniques that discourage participation are used.

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Note: Step 1 consists of acting and staging directions for you, the trainer: how you should speak and act as you role-play an inappropriate style of teaching. We advise that you use this activity only after you and your group have met several times in a normal work-session atmosphere.

Read and try to remember the words and manner outlined in *Step 1* as you might a playscript. Then, when the group convenes, improvise. *Do not tell your group that you are role-playing.* Adopt the following mannerisms:

- Speak rather quickly.
- Be unfriendly and unsympathetic.
- Proceed without paying attention to the participants' reactions to the silly idea that they are going to have a lesson in chair making. (If chairs are uncommon in your area, adapt your dialogue to fit another familiar object.)

STEP 1–*Be stern.* Tell the group, "Today we are going to discuss making a chair. I want you all to join in the discussion."

Look directly at one of the participants and ask, addressing the person by name, "Do *you* know how to make a chair?" Regardless of the answer, do not respond. Look at another person and ask the same question. Again, ignore the answer. Look at another person and ask, "What do you need to make a chair?" As the person answers, interrupt and say, "No! What you need to make a chair is eight pieces of wood. Nail four short pieces of wood to the corners of a flat, square piece of wood. Then nail the remaining pieces together and attach these to the square to form a backrest. Put a cushion on the flat square, and you have a chair. Everyone should have a chair to sit on... Now does everyone know how to make a chair?"

STEP 2–*Pause*, and then ask the group, "Do you all know how to make a chair?"
Revert, suddenly, to your usual way of talking to your group. "How did you feel about our discussion and the way I presented the lesson? What did I do right–or wrong?" This last question should elicit some laughter and the realization that you were role-playing. Encourage the group to relax and laugh at your performance.

STEP 3–Ask the group to point out all the things you did wrong. You might invite a volunteer to list on the board or newsprint *every* idea contributed by the participants.

STEP 4–Ask whether adults are likely to learn from the kind of person you portrayed. How would learners react to someone who behaves as you did?"

WHAT HAPPENED

Some of the group's comments during discussion were:

- Your manner was unfriendly. It was frightening.
- You didn't listen to or seem to care about our answers.
- Most of your questions only required a "yes" or "no" answer that couldn't lead to discussion.
- You spoke too fast.
- The information and instructions were confusing.
- You claimed that everyone should have a chair, but there are other things to sit on that work just as well.
- You said we needed wood and a cushion and such things are not available.
- You didn't show us a chair so we couldn't visualize what you were talking about.

Everyone agreed that this had been a good object lesson in how *not* to teach.

Field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.

Discussing an Article

TIME: 1 hr.

"We decided to use an essay from Carl Rogers's Freedom to Learn *to engage participants in active discussion about their roles as teachers. We also wanted to inspire critical thinking, and, in this particular case, to help the group members spell out more clearly their own views of the relationship between teaching and learning."*

SETTING

A meeting place large enough for the whole group to stand in a line

MATERIALS

Reprint from *Freedom to Learn* by Carl Rogers (one copy for each participant. See page 66)

Chalk

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Pass out copies of the excerpt from *Freedom to Learn* and ask participants to read the article, to decide the extent to which they agree or disagree with it, and to be prepared to defend their position.

STEP 2–Draw a chalk line on the floor, writing the words "agree" at one end and "disagree" at the other.

STEP 3–Ask several participants to stand on the line at a place that will illustrate the degree to which they agree or disagree with Roger's statement. Give several of them an opportunity to explain their positions.

STEP 4–Introduce a new phase after two or three have had a chance to speak. Ask someone who disagrees with the person currently standing on the line to find a place at the opposite end of the line and respond to the statements made. Make sure that participants engage in orderly debate–allowing each other time to speak, responding to points raised, etc. Move the activity along by giving everyone who wants to contribute to the discussion a couple of minutes to do so. You may also take a stand but be sure not to dominate the session. Indicate that you are joining in not as facilitator but as a group member.

STEP 5–Ask group members, when all have had a chance to speak out, to choose one or two ideas discussed in Steps 3 and 4 that were particularly illuminating or useful in helping them define their role as a teacher. Summarize by pointing out that before teaching can be effective, teachers or facilitators must clarify for themselves their own roles and philosophy of learning.

STEP 6–(Optional) Ask everyone to stand up and take a place on the line nearest to the point at which they agree or disagree with Rogers.

WHAT HAPPENED

The last step was the equivalent of a group vote and led to laughter and joking as people identified those who did and didn't share their point of view. Most crowded together toward the "agree" end of the line, but a few were scattered.

This activity led to a stimulating discussion. Participants all took a stand and expressed their own views on learning and teaching, on relationships between trainers and trainees, etc. Using this article as a discussion starter helped everyone to open up in an active, revealing dialogue and to enjoy sharing their ideas.

Note: When another trainer, Fredrica Teer, found that her group was having trouble completing reading assignments that were basic to the work they were doing together, she had her trainees read the article aloud. They took turns reading it, paragraph by paragraph, discussing each issue as it was raised.

Used by Noreen Clark in a workshop with Adult Basic Education teachers of adults in rural areas at St. Bonaventure University in New York State.

from FREEDOM TO LEARN

by Carl Rogers

Though it may be considered unseemly for me to say so, I like this chapter very much, because it expresses some of the deepest convictions I hold regarding those who work in the educational field. The essence of it was first presented as a lecture at Harvard University, but that essence has been revised and enlarged for this book.

I wish to begin this chapter with a statement which may seem surprising to some and perhaps offensive to others. It is simply this: Teaching, in my estimation, is a vastly overrated function.

Having made such a statement, I scurry to the dictionary to see if I really mean what I say. Teaching means "to instruct." Personally I am not much interested in instructing another in what he should know or think. "To impart knowledge or skill. . . ." My reaction is, why not be more efficient, using a book or programmed learning? "To make to know." Here my hackles rise. I have no wish to make anyone know something. "To show, guide, direct." As I see it, too many people have been shown, guided, directed. So I come to the conclusion that I do mean what I said. Teaching is, for me, a relatively unimportant and vastly overvalued activity.

But there is more in my attitude than this. I have a negative reaction to teaching. Why? I think it is because it raises all the wrong questions. As soon as we focus on teaching the question arises, what shall we teach? What, from our superior vantage point, does the other person need to know? I wonder if, in this modern world, we are justified in the presumption that we are wise about the future and the young are foolish. Are we really sure as to what they should know? Then there is the ridiculous question of coverage. What shall the course cover? This notion of coverage is based on the assumption that what is taught is what is learned; what is presented is what is assimilated. I know of no assumption so obviously untrue. One does not need research to provide evidence that this false. One needs only to talk with a few students.

But I ask myself, "Am I so prejudiced against teaching that I find no situation in which it is worthwhile?" I immediately think of my experiences in Australia, not so long ago. I became much interested in the aborigine. Here is a group which for more than 20,000 years has managed to live and exist in a desolate environment in which modern man would perish within a few days. The secret of the aborigine's survival has been teaching. He has passed on to the young every shred of knowledge about how to find water, about how to track game, about how to kill the kangaroo, about how to find his way through the trackless desert. Such knowledge is conveyed to the young as being the way to behave, and any innovation is frowned upon. It is clear that teaching has provided him the way to survive in a hostile and relatively unchanging environment.

Now I am closer to the nub of the question which excites me. Teaching and the imparting of knowledge make sense in an unchanging environment. This is why it has been an unquestioned function for centuries. But if there is one truth about modern man, it is that he lives in an environment which is continually changing. The one thing I can be sure of is that the physics which is taught to the present day student will be outdated in a decade. The teaching in psychology will certainly be out of date in 20 years. The so-called "facts of history" depend very largely upon the current mood and temper of the culture. Chemistry, biology, genetics, sociology, are in such flux that a firm statement made today will almost certainly be modified by the time the student gets around to using the knowledge.

We are, in my view, faced with an entirely new situation in education where the goal of education, if we are to survive, is the facilitation of change and learning. The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn; the man who has learned to adapt to change; the man who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security. Changingness, a reliance on process rather than upon static knowledge, is the only thing that makes any sense as a goal for education in the modern world.

So now with some relief I turn to an activity, a purpose, which really warms me—the facilitation of learning. When I have been able to transform a group—and here I mean all of the members of a group, myself included—into a community of learners, then the excitement has been almost beyond belief. To free curiosity: to permit individuals to go charging off in new directions dictated by their own interests; to unleash the sense of inquiry; to open everything to questioning and

exploration; to recognize that everything is in process of change—here is an experience I can never forget. I cannot always achieve it in groups with which I am associated but when it is partially or largely achieved then it becomes a never-to-be-forgotten group experience. Out of such a context arise true students, real learners, creative scientists and scholars and practitioners, the kind of individuals who live in a delicate but ever-changing balance between what is presently known and the flowing, moving, altering problems and facts of the future.

Here then is a goal to which I can give myself wholeheartedly. I see the facilitation of learning as the aim of education, the way in which we might develop the learning man, the way in which we can learn to live as individuals in process. I see the facilitation of learning as the function which may hold constructive, tentative, changing, process answers to some of the deepest perplexities which beset man today.

But do we know how to achieve this new goal in education, or is it a will-o'-the-wisp which sometimes occurs, sometimes fails to occur, and thus offers little real hope? My answer is that we possess a very considerable knowledge of the conditions which encourage self-initiated, significant, experiential, "gut-level" learning by the whole person. We do not frequently see these conditions put into effect because they mean a real revolution in our approach to education and revolutions are not for the timid. But we do, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, find examples of this revolution in action.

We know—and I will briefly describe some of the evidence—that the initiation of such learning rests not upon the teaching skills of the leader, not upon his scholarly knowledge of the field, not upon his curricular planning, not upon his use of audio-visual aids, not upon the programmed learning he utilizes, not upon his lectures and presentations, not upon an abundance of books, though each of these might at one time or another be utilized as an important resource. No, the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner.

We came upon such findings first in the field of psychotherapy, but increasingly there is evidence which shows that these finds apply in the classroom as well. We find it easier to think that the intensive relationship between therapist and client might possess these qualities, but we are also finding that they may exist in the countless interpersonal interactions (as many as 1,000 per day, as Jackson [1966] has shown) between the teacher and her pupils.

QUALITIES WHICH FACILITATE LEARNING

What are these qualities, these attitudes, which facilitate learning? Let me describe them very briefly, drawing illustrations from the teaching field.

Realness in the Facilitator of Learning

Perhaps the most basic of these essential attitudes is realness or genuineness. When the facilitator is a real person, being what he is, entering into a relationship with the learner without presenting a front or facade, he is much more likely to be effective. This means that the feelings which he is experiencing are available to him, available to his awareness, that he is able to live these feelings, be them, and able to communicate them if appropriate. It means that he comes into a direct personal encounter with the learner, meeting him on a person-to-person basis. It means that he is being himself, not denying himself.

Seen from this point of view it is suggested that the teacher can be a real person in his relationship with his students. He can be enthusiastic, he can be bored, he can be interested in students, he can be angry, he can be sensitive and sympathetic. Because he accepts these feelings as his own he has no need to impose them on his students. He can like or dislike a student product without implying that it is objectively good or bad or that the student is good or bad. He is simply expressing a feeling for the product, a feeling which exists within himself. Thus, he is a person to his students, not a faceless embodiment of a curricular requirement nor a sterile tube through which knowledge is passed from one generation to the next.

It is obvious that this attitudinal set, found to be effective in psychotherapy, is sharply in contrast with the tendency of most teachers to show themselves to their pupils simply as roles. It is quite customary for teachers rather consciously to put on the mask, the role, the facade, of being a teacher, and to wear this facade all day, removing it only when they have left the school at night.

I trust I am making it clear that to be real is not always easy, nor is it achieved all at once, but it

is basic to the person who wants to become that revolutionary individual, a facilitator of learning.

Prizing, Acceptance, Trust

There is another attitude which stands out in those who are successful in facilitating learning. I have observed this attitude. I have experienced it. Yet, it is hard to know what term to put to it so I shall use several. I think of it as prizing the learner, prizing his feelings, his opinions, his person. It is caring for the learner, but a non-possessive caring. It is an acceptance of this other individual as a separate person, having worth in his own right. It is a basic trust—a belief that this other person is somehow fundamentally trustworthy. Whether we call it prizing, acceptance, trust, or by some other term, it shows up in a variety of observable ways. The facilitator who has a considerable degree of this attitude can be fully acceptant of the fear and hesitation of the student as he approaches a new problem as well as acceptant of the pupil's satisfaction in achievement. Such a teacher can accept the student's occasional apathy, his erratic desires to explore by-roads of knowledge, as well as his disciplined efforts to achieve major goals. He can accept personal feelings which both disturb and promote learning—rivalry with a sibling, hatred of authority, concern about personal adequacy. What we are describing is a prizing of the learner as an imperfect human being with many feelings, many potentialities. The facilitator's prizing or acceptance of the learner is an operational expression of his essential confidence and trust in the capacity of the human organism.

A further element which establishes a climate for self-initiated, experiential learning is empathic understanding. When the teacher has the ability to understand the student's reactions from the inside, has a sensitive awareness of the way the process of education and learning seems to the student, then again the likelihood of significant learning is increased.

This kind of understanding is sharply different from the usual evaluative understanding, which follows the patterns of, "I understand what is wrong with you." When there is a sensitive empathy, however, the reaction in the learner follows something of this pattern: "At last someone understands how it feels and seems to be me without wanting to analyze me or judge me. Now I can blossom and grow and learn."

This attitude of standing in the other's shoes, in viewing the world through the student's eyes, is almost unheard of in the classroom. One could listen to thousands of ordinary classroom interactions without coming across one instance of clearly communicated, sensitively accurate, empathic understanding. But it has a tremendously releasing effect when it occurs.

If any teacher set himself the task of endeavoring to make one non-evaluative, acceptant, empathic response per day to a student's demonstrated or verbalized feeling, I believe he would discover the potency of this currently almost non-existent kind of understanding.

This chapter is a revised version of a presentation first published in *Humanizing Education*, ed. R. Leeper, ASCD, NEA, 1967.
Freedom To Learn, Carl Rogers. Charles Merrill Co. 1969, pg. 103-112.

Role Playing: Open-Ended Dramas

TIME: 1½ hrs.

The planning committee wanted to show that an open-ended problem drama can be a useful way to stimulate discussion. The activity also demonstrated several other techniques: the tape recorder as an audio-visual aid, role playing as a learning technique, observation as a means of assessment. The activity also helped focus attention on a nondirective model of facilitator behavior.

SETTING

A quiet meeting place, large enough for four or five persons to act out their parts with the rest of the group acting as observers

MATERIALS

Tape recorder

A recorded problem drama (Be sure sound track is clear and audible.)

Paper and pencils

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Select five or six volunteers. One will play the role of a facilitator; the others will be village residents listening and reacting to an open-ended problem drama.

STEP 2–Ask the "facilitator" to introduce a recorded open-ended problem drama to the "villagers" and, at its conclusion, to guide the discussion in as nondirective a manner as possible. Remind the "facilitator" to try to establish an atmosphere of freedom so that the "villagers" will express their opinions and suggest alternative solutions to the problem posed in the recording.

STEP 3–Ask the remainder of the group to be observers. Give them specific suggestions on what to look for, particularly in the behavior of the "facilitator." For example: What kind of role does the "facilitator" take? What method does he or she use to get the discussion going? Were the "villagers" dependent on the "facilitator" to keep the discussion moving? How were they encouraged to share their ideas, reactions, possible solutions? Did any "villagers" dominate the discussion?

STEP 4–Have the "facilitator" present the taped drama and lead the discussion. (Allow 15 minutes.)

STEP 5–Ask the "facilitator" to step down at this point and describe any immediate feelings about playing the facilitator role. Have the "villagers" also tell their reactions to the experience they have had.

STEP 6–Ask the observers to give their views: What did they actually see happening? Have them confine their observations to actual

data—what they saw, not what they thought or felt.

STEP 7–Lead a discussion of the use of the problem drama, including other ways it might be used.

Note: Maybe you will need to review some of the characteristics of good problem dramas:

- They should be based on a locally relevant anecdote or situation depicting some familiar, poignant problem.
- They should be left unresolved so that the learners will have to supply their own interpretation and suggest possible resolutions of the situation.
- They should occur over a short period of time.
- They should focus on one major point rather than encompass several story threads.
- They should contain believable characters—not all good or all bad—so that learners may side with more than one.
- They should be genuinely controversial, allowing for more than one reasonable conclusion.

STEP 8–Encourage discussion about the effectiveness of role-play and other ways they might use this technique. Stress the importance of briefing people for their roles, giving them time to prepare, and allowing them to say how they felt during the role-play before inviting the observers to discuss what they saw. Ask them also what they think about the importance of disciplined observation that focuses on specific points that the observer and trainer have chosen.

WHAT HAPPENED

Both the demonstration and the discussion were lively. The trainees were eager to develop their own dramas to try out in the villages they were going to visit the next day. The dramas were taped and taken out to the villages and successfully used to start discussions there. None of these dramas is available in translation, but it may be just as well not to supply an example here. No one else's could serve your purposes as well as those that you and your group devise.

Used by Lyra Srinivasan in a three-week training workshop with staff members of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

Creating Open-Ended Dramas

TIME: Part I – 1 hr. / Part II – 3 hrs.

The trainers were conducting a workshop for facilitators who would be working with women's groups in their own villages. The facilitators would be helping to plan educational activities and to resolve problems of concern to the women. In this session the trainers wanted the facilitator/trainees to have a chance to design their own problem dramas and to revise them on the basis of comments from their colleagues.

SETTING

A quiet meeting place large enough for teams of two or three people to work together without disturbing each other.

MATERIALS

Pencils and paper

Tape recorders and cassettes for each team (optional)

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Part I (To be used only if your group has not been involved in an activity similar to the preceding one that included a discussion of guidelines for open-ended problem dramas.)

STEP 1–Read the group a sample open-ended problem drama that you have created.

STEP 2–Discuss the story with the group, using the following questions as guidelines. (Summarize responses on newsprint or the blackboard.)

- What was the main problem in the story? Was there more than one?
- Where might this story have taken place? Have you ever encountered a similar problem in your village?
- Over what period of time did the story occur?
- How do the people in the story compare to people you know? Are they realistic?
- What might the characters do to solve the problem? Is there more than one possible solution?
- Why do you think the problem in the story is left unsolved?
- How might you use this kind of story in a learning group?

STEP 3–Get the trainees to suggest the characteristics of a good open-ended problem drama. (See the list of characteristics in the *Note*

in the preceding exercise.) List those finally agreed upon on the newsprint or blackboard.

Part II (If your group has already done an activity similar to Part I begin with the steps in Part II.)

STEP 4–Ask the group to recall the guidelines they developed for writing an open-ended problem drama. List them on newsprint or blackboard as trainees state them.

STEP 5–Divide the groups into teams of two or three people when all main guidelines have been covered.

STEP 6–Give each team some pencils and paper, and a tape recorder and cassette if available, and ask them to create a problem drama to use with the groups with whom they will work. If the teams are using tape recorders, ask them to record the drama and be prepared to play it back to all the participants. If they are not using a tape recorder, tell each team to be prepared to read the drama aloud. (Allow about 1-1/2 hours for the teams to write their problem dramas.)

STEP 7–Reconvene after all the teams have created their own dramas. Ask a team to volunteer to read or play its drama to the group.

STEP 8–Ask the whole group the following questions:

- Is this a good problem drama?
- Keeping in mind the guidelines we developed, what things about this story contributed to making it a good problem drama?
- What parts could be changed to make it more effective?
- What questions could be used to stimulate discussion about the drama?

STEP 9–Repeat Steps 7 and 8 until each team has had an opportunity to share its problem drama with the group.

STEP 10–Finish the session by asking the group members to summarize their strengths as a writing team and to identify the areas where improvement is needed.

WHAT HAPPENED

The teams had a great deal of fun developing generally lively dramas that were relevant to problems existing in the areas where they lived. They seemed to have difficulty creating dramas that were focused on one theme rather than on several problems. At first, the main problem of each drama was not easily identified. In subsequent sessions, however, the teams became adept at creating effective problem dramas that would stimulate focused discussion with village groups.

Used by Noreen Clark and Catherine D. Crone in Kenya.

Stories That Start Discussion

TIME: Three activities: 1½ days

"We planned this series of three related activities for several purposes. The first activity was to give the group practice in using stories to stimulate a discussion and in preparing thought-provoking questions. It would also give them practice in seeing the effect of their questions and in observing the role of the facilitator. We used the second and third activities to create new stories that they could use later to get discussion going in their own learner groups."

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Pictures and a sample story, culturally relevant and open-ended—1 copy for each participant if possible.

Paper and pencils

Newsprint sheets and felt pen
or
Blackboard and chalk

Note: We have included several stories at the end of these activities (see pages 78 to 82). They came from different cultures and none, of course, will match the specific concerns of your community, but they can give an idea of the type of story needed.

CONDUCTING THE FIRST ACTIVITY

TIME: 2 hrs.

STEP 1–Ask the group to read a sample story. (If copies are not available, ask one person to read aloud.)

STEP 2–Ask each participant to prepare several questions that could be used to engage a group in active discussion following the story. Allow about 10 minutes for this; then ask for volunteers to read their questions and to record them on the blackboard or on newsprint.

STEP 3–Ask group members to choose the five questions they would like to see accompany the story.

STEP 4–Select a volunteer to assume the role of facilitator and lead a discussion for 10 or 15 minutes about the story, using one or more of the five selected questions as a base. Send the volunteer off to prepare.

Note: If the group is large, divide it into smaller groups and ask for additional volunteers to lead discussion also using the five questions.

STEP 5–Suggest to the remaining group members things to observe during the discussion:

- Are the questions effective? Do they stimulate discussion?
- Are the questions helpful in enabling learners to relate the story to their past experience?
- Does the facilitator explore the feelings of the group towards the story?
- What specific things does the facilitator do to help the discussion? Does the facilitator do anything that cuts off or blocks discussion?
- Are all members of the group given a chance to express themselves?

STEP 6–Give the group time for the discussion.

STEP 7–Ask the participants to review their reactions to the activity. Give the volunteer also a chance to react, stating whether there had been difficulty with the story or with the suggested questions.

STEP 8–Ask the whole group to use brainstorming techniques (see page 58) to generate, and then discuss, the factors that make a story particularly good for stimulating discussion.

STEP 9–Follow this same procedure to determine what makes questions good for use with stories.

STEP 10–Use additional ideas from the attached guidelines on writing stories and planning questions to add ideas the group may have overlooked to the list. (See pages 76 and 77.)

CONDUCTING THE SECOND ACTIVITY

TIME: 4 hrs.

STEP 1–This session will be used to develop themes and then plots and characters for new stories to stimulate discussion. Emphasize the necessity of basing stories on what they already know of the learners with whom they work. Previous interviews, visits to the *barrio* or neighborhood, whatever they have observed or heard should serve as the basis for conceiving and writing their stories.

STEP 2–Divide the participants into smaller teams. They will have three tasks: to develop a general description of the group with which the story is to be used; to outline a theme based on some initial needs assessment data the group has generated (see Section II); and to brainstorm a plot suggested by the story theme.

STEP 3–When the teams have finished their planning, ask for a volunteer from each small group to write that group's theme and plot outline on the blackboard or newsprint.

STEP 4–End this session by asking everyone to choose one of the plot outlines and write a story for the next session. Ask them also each to prepare five questions about their stories that they believe will stimulate discussion.

CONDUCTING THE THIRD ACTIVITY

TIME: 3–4 hrs.

STEP 1–Ask each participant to read his or her story aloud and then lead a discussion using the follow-up questions prepared by the author.

Note: If there are more than 10 members in your group, obviously they cannot all read their stories and discuss them during one session. You may find it useful to spend several sessions on this activity, or to break the group into smaller groups so that each story-writer/reader will have four or five members of a small group to listen to the story, discuss the questions, and comment upon the activity.

STEP 2–After the story has been discussed, ask each person to think about what changes might make the story more effective for discussion.

STEP 3–Have the group suggest community resources or agencies that might provide help in dealing with the problem the story emphasizes.

WHAT HAPPENED

When we first showed our sample stories to the group, members complained that the stories were too depressing and that the pictures weren't sufficiently related to the issues raised. When they had a chance to work on some stories themselves, using pictures to get everyone to talk about their particular problems, they found out that the stories that they wrote were pretty depressing too: problems of old age, poverty, disappointments at work or in the family.

They also began to realize that a picture need not be very explicit. We wanted the group first of all to talk about their feelings. Pictures that evoke emotions and discussion about a variety of concerns work better because they provide an opportunity to consider several aspects of a situation and then to focus on the one that arouses the greatest concern in the community.

During the final session, when participants shared their own stories and led discussions, they began to see how this exercise can open people up and involve them in sharing their feelings and thinking about their own needs and things they might do to fill those needs. One trainer described the way the group usually responds to such a story discussion: "First people begin talking about what's there–in the story–then after a while someone says, 'Well, you know, something like that happened to me once.' And then group members start talking about their own experience. Suddenly everyone has something to contribute from his or her own life experience." The exercise helped the group to see that the trainer or the facilitator need not be the expert and that this is a good way to demonstrate it and to get everyone involved in analyzing a problem and suggesting solutions.

Used by Noreen Clark and David Narot with teachers in Project TARA (Teaching Adults in Rural Areas) at St. Bonaventure University in New York State. Also used by Fredrica Teer with staff members of a New York State Division for Youth project in New York City.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING STORIES

Good stories to spark discussion are based on local concerns and needs. Find out, first of all, what kind of things your particular community is worrying about. When you have a clear idea of the special problems and issues most important there, use one of these shared concerns as the focus of your story. Here are a few suggestions for creating an effective story:

- Let the problem unfold with actions, conversations, and descriptions. The story is really a miniature drama where the characters act out a conflict without stating it directly. Don't spoil the effect by giving too many answers.
- Leave the problem in the story unresolved. The best stories are left open-ended so the group can devise its own conclusion. Don't tie up all the loose ends—leave that for the discussion.
- Create a story that doesn't preach. There may indeed be ethical or moral issues raised but these should be defined by the group.
- Keep the story brief, 300 – 500 words.
- Think about the vocabulary level of your learners. Use words that they will be comfortable with but include a few new words as well.
- Include a mix of description, conversation, and action. Use the language with which your particular group is familiar, and make sure that the conversation sounds like their friends and neighbors.
- Write stories that are emotionally involving and express feelings. Include people and events that make the reader feel pity, anger, sadness, or some other strong emotion. If the story is mild or wishy-washy, reaction is likely to be the same.
- Limit each story to highlighting one particular problem of major concern. Don't try to handle more than one area of concern at a time.

Adapted from AIM: A Creative Approach to Teaching Adults, *ed. Margaret Brehmer. New York: World Education, 1977.*

Planning Questions to Start Discussion

The discussion starts with the picture. Give everyone plenty of time to look at it and think about it. With your first question, find out what everyone sees in the picture, what it reminds them of, what they think it depicts. You can begin by asking questions like:

- What do you see here?
- What are the people doing?
- What do you think happened just before the picture was taken?
- What is going to happen next?

When everyone has described what they see, encourage people to give more personal reactions:

- How do you feel when you look at this picture?
- How do you think these people feel?
- How would you like to be in this situation?
- Did anything like this ever happen to you?

By the time you turn to the story, the group should have become emotionally involved in the situation presented in the photo and curious to read the story. Have everyone read the story, together or individually. Or maybe you will decide to read the story aloud.

Ask the group to retell the story in their own words or to act it out. Ask general comprehension questions first:

- What is happening?
- What happens first?
- Where does the story take place?
- Who is involved?
- How are the characters related?
- What happens at the end of the story?

Then move on to the questions that draw on the students' own experiences:

- What are these people like?
- What do you think of them?
- What problems do they face?
- What do you think caused these problems?
- What should the people do about them?
- Have you ever had problems like theirs?

You will think of plenty of questions as you go along. Let the session develop as your students indicate. Don't be afraid of letting them go in unexpected directions. Planning should help you, not limit you.

Adapted from AIM: A Creative Approach to Teaching Adults, *ed. Margaret Brehmer. New York: World Education, 1977.*

DOUBTS

Sample story from the United States

As he stood there impatiently waiting for the next photograph to be taken, a thousand and one questions kept running through Miguel's mind. "What am I getting into? Will I have enough money to get her all the things she wants? Will I make her a good lover? A good husband? A good provider?"

As all these questions ran through Miguel's head, Gabriel, his best friend and best man, came up and interrupted his thoughts.

"What's the matter, buddy?" asked Gabriel. "Why the long face? Is anything wrong?"

"No," said Miguel. "I was just wondering about a lot of things. It is just beginning to hit me that I'm taking one of the most important steps in my life."

"Well, buddy, don't let that bother you too much. You've done pretty well up to now. And if I know you, you'll probably be able to take care of any problem that comes up," Gabe reassured his friend.

Miguel managed a smile. "You're probably right, Gabe."

"How about something to drink, buddy?" asked Gabe. "I know just the thing that'll make all your worries seem like nothing.'

As Gabriel led him off to the side where the drinks were, Miguel struggled to put the doubts out of his mind.

Story by Joe Morales
Photo by Ernie Arbizo

The AIM (for Apperception-Interaction Method) approach to adult learning as it has been developed in the United States by World Education is entirely based on discussion of picture stories. Facilitators prepare stories based on the concerns their learners have identified. This particular story was one of about 30 used with ABE (Adult Basic Education) students in Corpus Christi, Texas.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, TURKEY

ELIF'S WORRIES

Sample story from Turkey

Elif was tired after a long day of work. She had been in bed for hours, but she was still awake. "It's because it's so hot," she thought. But she was really remembering what Sultan had said.

It was the first time they had seen each other since Sultan married and went to live in her husband's village. They had so much to talk about, and Sultan had news. "I'm going to have a child, Elif!" she said, hugging her. Elif could see the happiness in Sultan's eyes, and found herself sharing that happiness.

She remembered Sultan's story.

"Recently I felt funny and told my mother-in-law. She's very nice. She told Omer to take me to the doctor. She said it was important.

"The next day Omer took me to the town. The doctor examined me and told us to come back in the afternoon. When we did the doctor was in her office and I knew there couldn't be anything wrong. She said she had something to tell Omer.

"'Your wife is pregnant,' she said. I couldn't listen to the rest of her words, couldn't look at her or Omer. I don't know whether it was from happiness or from shyness.

"Later Omer told me what the doctor said. She said I should eat this, should not eat that, should do this, should not do that. It was confusing, but I'm supposed to see the doctor every month or two, even if I feel all right. If I have any complaints I must go to her immediately. You wouldn't believe how serious Omer was while he was telling me this! He even said, 'Having an easy childbirth and a healthy baby depends on how well you follow the doctor's advice."

Elif had listened silently. Everything Sultan had said was so strange! Elif's own village was far from the town, and the roads were bad. It would be hard enough for a healthy person to go to the doctor; a sick one would never stand the trip, especially in the winter. So pregnant women had to rely on the midwives. There were two of them, and they had been midwives for as long as anyone remembered. They had never been to school, but all the women knew and depended on them.

Elif felt something odd. Was she jealous of Sultan, her best friend? Maybe it was just that she was so happy for her. But what else was Sultan saying?

"Elif, do you know what else the doctor asked Omer?"

Elif couldn't guess. She looked anxiously at Sultan.

"The doctor asked, 'Do you want to have a child?' But you don't know how easy things are now. If you want to, you can have a child; if not, there are ways of protection."

"Does that mean you could never have another child, then?"

"No, no. If you want to, you may have a child again. Everything depends on your will."

Sultan paused and looked at her friend.

"Elif, you can't imagine all the things I've learned in the three months since I left our village."

Sultan was right. Elif had never imagined such things. She wondered if her life would be like that.

Tomorrow would be another busy day. "I've got to stop thinking and try to get some sleep."

Adapted from the pilot materials for the beginners' level of a functional education for family life planning project designed and produced collaboratively by World Education and the Republic of Turkey. In this project, line drawings were used to provoke discussion instead of photographs. Some of these stories were in the form of letters, or short, open-ended problem dramas. All were based on a survey of community concerns and needs that was conducted at the beginning of the project. Characters were repeated from episode to episode. They became familiar to the learners—who discussed what the characters might do about the problems they encountered.

SI KABAYAN PAYS HIS DEBTS

Sample story from Indonesia

Si Kabayan has gotten so in debt to the loan shark that it makes him dizzy to think about it. How can he possibly pay off his debts when he no longer possesses a single thing of value that might be sold to obtain the money? He broods and thinks and schemes for a whole day, straining his tired brain, until at last he hits upon a possibility . . .

"Finally I know what I must do," Kabayan tells his wife. Then he tells her of his plan. His wife agrees and enthusiastically prepares to help execute the scheme. First, they prepare a tub full of sticky palm juice, and Si Kabayan dunks himself in this. Then he covers his entire body with white chalk and feathers. After this he takes a large chicken basket and hides himself under it.

Shortly thereafter the loan shark, Ahmed, arrives at the house to claim his money.

"Oh, Si Kabayan isn't at home!" exclaims the wife.

"Then where has he gone, this Kabayan?" enjoins Ahmed.

"He has gone to appear before the King," says Kabayan's wife.

"The King? What has occurred that Si Kabayan must go before the King?"

"He wants to report to the King that he has captured a very rare and mysterious bird . . ."

"A rare and mysterious bird??? What, pray tell, is this bird like?"

The money lender is very excited and greatly desires to see the bird, but Kabayan's wife rejects his requests. The bird is going to be presented to the King as a gift, and Kabayan has given strict orders that no-

one is to see the wonderful bird until the King has seen it himself with his own eyes. This makes Ahmed all the more eager to behold the bird, and he pleads with Kabayan's wife that he might be allowed just one peek at the mysterious and rare bird.

Kabayan's wife makes more false protestations, but finally leads the curious money lender to the back of the house where he sees the large covered chicken basket. Burning with curiosity, he lifts the cover a few inches and then, not being able to see anything, he lifts the cover a little further....

Suddenly Kabayan leaps out of the basket and crows "ba-ra-tak-tak, ba-ra-tak-tak" and runs quickly away and out of sight. Kabayan's wife begins to cry and stare at the now empty basket. "YOU!" she exclaims, "what am I to tell Kabayan now? And what will the King say? It's all your fault, and I must tell everything to my husband so that he can inform the King... hu-hu-hu... and she begins to cry again.

Ahmed is terrified.

"Hey, please don't tell, don't tell!" he pleads. "Don't tell your husband... don't let him tell the King!"

Finally, Ahmed begs,

"If you don't tell your husband that it was I who let the magic bird loose, and if he doesn't tell the King... then I free you from all your debts!!!"

Field workers in Indonesia also used stories for group discussions. The authors were careful to use culturally relevant material. As in Turkey, the characters are repeated from story to story. Si Kabayan gets in and out of troubles familiar to his Indonesian readers, though perhaps in ways they have never considered.

Translated and adapted from materials prepared at the National Center for the Development of Learning Activities/Jayagiri at Lembang, West Java, Indonesia.

Games for Teaching and Learning

TIME: 2–3 hrs.

The trainers wanted to discover whether village-level facilitators could invent and use games in their own educational activities.

SETTING

Space, either indoors or outdoors, where participants can move about and engage in games

MATERIALS

Whatever materials are necessary to play the first game of the trainer's choosing

(Trainees will have to search out resources for the games they create during the activity)

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Suggest a game and explain its rules.

Note: If you have been working with this group over a period of time and have used any game–such as *Broken Squares* (see page 18)–review the steps in the game and why it was used in the course of the training. If no games have been used so far, play the simple familiar game "*Rumor*" or "*Pass the Message.*" Have all participants sit in a circle. Whisper a message in the ear of the person next to you. Have that person repeat it to the next person. The message may not be repeated more than once for each participant. Whatever is heard must be passed on. When the message gets to the end of the circle, see how it differs from what was originally transmitted. Here is an example: "Tomorrow is the village chief's birthday. We intend to visit him carrying presents such as oranges, apples, peanuts and candies, and a great big cake with lighted candles on it." Be sure the message makes sense in the local setting. If you play this particular game, discuss what it illustrates, such as how rumors get started, how messages get distorted.

STEP 2–Explain that a game may help people to see ordinary things in a new way. It may also start a conversation or suggest new ideas to the players.

STEP 3–Ask trainees to discuss what makes a good game. What did they enjoy about the game they have just played? What did they learn? What made the game work well–or poorly? Some of the points to be included, if the trainees do not make them, are: A game is good if:

- the person presenting it is well organized and has tested it with a small group first;
- people understand the rules of the game;
- the game introduces an idea that is central to the content of the learning experience;

- as many people as possible have a chance to play;
- the follow-up questions lead to a lively discussion.

STEP 4–Ask trainees if they have used games in their work before this workshop and what their experience has been with them. Were the criteria mentioned above met in those games?

STEP 5–Ask what games villagers–or the particular target group for whom they are designing learning experiences–customarily play. List these on the blackboard or newsprint. How might these games be adapted for use in an educational setting?

STEP 6–Divide trainees into groups of no more than six persons each and ask each group to develop a new game related to the content they want to present in one of their educational designs. The games should be based on models already familiar in the area. Groups should also prepare and write down the questions they would use to start a discussion after their game has been played.

STEP 7–Bring the small groups together; ask each group to lead the rest in the game and discussion it has prepared.

STEP 8–Allow time after each demonstration game and discussion for feedback from the other participants. Discuss additional uses for the new game.

WHAT HAPPENED

An interesting game was developed in Thailand when this activity was tested. It is based on a game commonly played by villagers in the area. *Going to Market.* Facilitator asks each participant to name protein-rich foods. The first participant says, "I went to market today and I bought some eggs." The second player says, "I went to market today and I bought some eggs and some milk." The third player says, "I went to market today and I bought some eggs, milk, and fish." The game continues with each player having to repeat all the food items mentioned by previous players and adding her own food purchase.

Note: Another game that is fun and that helps to raise a group's spirits when members are feeling frustrated is the *Telegram Game*. Each member of the group writes a brief message to each of the other members, mentioning one positive quality that she or he admires about the other person. The trainer should be included in the game.

When used in a workshop in Pakistan, the *Telegram Game* helped to bring together a group of trainees who were having trouble working as a team. Members agreed that occasionally stopping to appreciate contributions made by others in the group is cheering and useful.

Field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.
Used by Catherine D. Crone in the example cited above.
Previously used by Leon Clark in Bangladesh.

Old Woman, Young Woman

TIME: 1 hr.

On the second day of a three-day workshop to help facilitators improve their skills, the trainer wanted the group to experience how people may perceive the same thing differently. He also wanted them to examine how the immediate environment can affect an individual's perception.

SETTING

Any space large enough for two groups to have a discussion without disturbing each other (preferably two rooms)

MATERIALS

Discussion guides: "Young Women's Fashions" (for half the group)
"Old People's Homes" (for the other half)

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

Copies of one of the drawings on page 87 (at least one for each group—use whichever seems more appropriate)

Pencils and paper

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Divide participants into two groups of six and eight people each. Give discussion guides—"Young Women's Fashions" and "Old People's Homes"—to different groups and ask the groups to discuss their topic for 10 minutes. During the discussions, move from group to group, answering any questions.

STEP 2–After about 10 minutes, stop the discussion and ask participants to listen to your directions: "The next part of the exercise should be done in silence. I'm going to give each of you a drawing—look at it and write a brief description of the subject you see." Distribute the drawing to participants and ask them to complete their description in five minutes.

STEP 3–After five minutes tabulate group members' perception of the drawing according to the subject they describe. (Use this chart, reproducing it on the blackboard or newsprint.)

TABULATION CHART

SUBJECT OF PICTURE	GROUP A	GROUP B
Young Woman		
Old Woman		
Other		

Point out any trends, such as that most of the people in Group A described a young woman.

STEP 4–Ask one of the participants to lead a discussion of the group's experience by referring to the following three questions (which you may want to write on newsprint):

- Why did individuals react differently to the same stimulus?
- Were you influenced by the discussion in which you took part?
- What comparisons can you draw with real-world situations?

STEP 5–Point out that as group leaders or facilitators, we must be sensitive to the fact that people often react to the same thing differently and a person's background and environment often affects how he or she perceives things.

WHAT HAPPENED

In the Indonesia training session, Group A debated about the loss of tradition and lack of cultural identity expressed by modern young women; Group B discussed the situation of old people using examples from experience. They also talked about possible roles of community education in alleviating some of the loneliness and isolation they attributed to old people.

Except for one person who saw both images, all the participants saw the image that they had been conditioned to see by the discussion that had preceded. At first there was some debate about which of them were "right" in their perceptions since they had all received the same picture; but it was quickly realized that it was the discussion topics that had separated the two groups.

Lively discussion followed. One person, already familiar with the game, noted that even though he knew that there were two pictures presented as one, the representation conditioned by the previous discussion had caused "one picture to jump off the page at me."

Another member jumped quickly to the heart of the matter: "If a mechanic looks at a bus, he sees the make, the wheels, the year, the condition of the machine. A student looking at the same bus may see his friends inside, and a farmer may see the vegetables strapped to the roof."

The first question ("Why did individuals react differently to the same stimulus?") met with long discussion on many points. The second question ("Were you influenced by the previous discussion?") met with a roaring "YES!" The third question, about related real-world situations, met with knowing smiles and nods and some concrete examples concerning village work.

Note: A shorter and simpler version of this exercise, using the same familiar drawing, involves simply passing the drawing around the group and then seeing how many see one image, how many the other. The discussion that follows helps participants understand that people's perceptions in any given situation should be respected, and that honest perceptions cannot be categorized as either "right" or "wrong," only different.

Source: Originally drawn by W. E. Hill and appearing in *Puck* on 6th November, 1905, this drawing has been used many times since as an "ambiguous figure" for psychological purposes.

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR GROUP A

Young Women's Fashions

It is often said that today's young woman is not fashion conscious; she prefers dirty blue jeans and scruffy men's shirts to furs and silk scarves. What does your group think about this statement? Discuss the issue quietly among yourselves.

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR GROUP B

Old People's Homes

It is sometimes said that old people's homes are sad places, for all elderly people need the company of their families and grandchildren, not only the company of the elderly people.

Put yourself in the place of an older person. Pretend your group is made up of residents of an old people's home. How do members of your group feel about their lives? Discuss this quietly among yourselves.

Used by John Pettit in a facilitator-skills training workshop with the staff of the National Center for the Development of Learning Activities (Directorate General of Nonformal Education, Sports, and Youth) in Indonesia. Adapted from Lyra Srinivasan's Workshop Ideas for Family Planning Education.

Differences in Visual Perception

TIME: 45 minutes

It was the first training session on designing materials. The trainer thought it important at this early stage to remind the group of the importance of selecting pictures that are culturally relevant and visually clear, depicting persons, places, and things that are sufficiently familiar to villagers. She hoped that this activity would help the group select effective materials from the outset and would reduce the need for revisions after field-testing.

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

One copy of both picture pages (Figures 1 and 2 on pages 91 and 92) for each participant

Note: Make copies of drawings included with this activity. Figure 1 shows drawings of a variety of common objects. Figure 2 is a duplicate of Figure 1 but includes percentages of adult illiterates who correctly identified the objects.

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Distribute Figure 1 and engage participants in discussion.

- Ask participants if they think adult illiterates would have difficulty in identifying any of these objects. If so, which ones?
- Ask them to guess what might be the interpretations of the difficult objects.

STEP 2–Distribute Figure 2. Ask the participants to review the percentages and then discuss their findings.

WHAT HAPPENED

After studying the drawings, the group decided that only the bananas and the wheel would be difficult. They were surprised to learn that the results of the study indicated that even the most common objects, like the cow, were difficult for some illiterates to identify, and that not even *one* object was identified correctly by everyone.

Participants concluded that line drawings had to be well planned and very clearly drawn to communicate anything, but that even so, the interpretation of line drawings is in itself an acquired rather than an innate skill. Their observation concurs with the study done by Fuglesang among African illiterates, in which outline drawings were ranked lowest in preference among four types of pictorial techniques tested. The trainees agreed to remind themselves constantly of such differences in perception when they designed graphic materials for rural people.

Note: When World Education tested this exercise in Latin America, participants found it hard to believe that their own clients would have such problems in perception. Our consultant had to produce evidence that rural people in Latin America, subjected to a similar test by Oscar Viganó, had also failed to recognize simple drawings. But this group of educators and family planning specialists were still dubious. So finally the trainer produced this activity: He wrote the sentence "Latinoamérica y su su primavera" on a large triangular piece of cardboard and showed it to the group. After allowing time for them to look at it, he asked them what they saw, and what the sentence said. They described the card in detail—its shape and color—and read the sentence, "Latinoamérica y su primavera." Then the trainer showed them the card again and pointed out the error: that the word "su" was written twice. The group agreed that they had seen what they expected to see and hadn't noticed the error at all. They admitted that it would be even harder for learners with whom they worked to identify visual images correctly.

Published originally in Workshop Ideas for Family Planning Education *by Lyra Srinivasan, World Education, 1975. Used by Catherine D. Crone in a workshop conducted with the staff of the Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement, and adapted by Luis Marla Aller Atucha for use in Latin America.*

Percentages refer to correct responses of illiterate rural adults in field tests with groups ranging from 162 to 793 people.

98%

98%

31%

Misconceptions: tortoise, crocodile, pineapple, bird, fish, mosquito, man

75%

32%

Misconceptions: fingers, palm, bird, flowers, tree, man

69%

11%

Misconceptions: watch, moon, umbrella, bowl, star

48%

10%

Misconceptions: butterfly, bee, locust, spider, mosquito, grasshopper, cockroach, crab

35%

Picture Reading

TIME 2 hrs.

The trainer wanted a group of materials developers to become adept at selecting pictures that stimulate active learning, and to discuss and establish criteria for choosing such pictures. He hoped that this three-part mini-course would help to extend the group's use of visual learning materials.

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Bulletin board, corkboard, or other display area

Paper (at least three sheets for each participant) and pencils

Pushpins or transparent tape

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pens

–for Part I–four photographs: two that seem to pose problems; two that seem to make a statement or offer an answer

–for Part II–four visuals: one photograph, one blocked-out photograph (in which background detail has been eliminated) one line drawing, one silhouette

–for Part III–a picture resource file: photos, drawings, magazine prints, etc., of many subjects–people, animals, places, things

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Part I

STEP 1–Pin or tape the four photographs in the display area.

STEP 2–Ask the group to evaluate each of the pictures as a potential stimulus to group learning. Discuss aspects to consider: theme, impact, composition, clarity, and so on.

STEP 3–Distribute paper and pencils. Ask trainees to draw four squares to represent the displayed photos and to rank the photographs in order of their effectiveness to spark discussion. Under each number, ask participants to write their reasons for their choices.

STEP 4–Engage the group in a general discussion of the selection process. On the blackboard, or on newsprint, have a volunteer record points on which consensus is reached.

WHAT HAPPENED

It became clear there were many different ideas as to what makes a good picture or an effective stimulus to learning. Some thought contrast was important; others thought that the visual statement of a problem mattered more. In some cases, feelings about the subject matter admittedly affected a participant's choice. The group agreed on the following points:

- Unless criteria for choice are firmly established in advance, continual disagreement may result.
- To be useful in stimulating discussion about a specific problem, a picture must depict a single, clear theme.
- Since what is seen in a picture varies from viewer to viewer, pictures chosen must be as unequivocal as possible.

In talking about those pictures that made statements or gave "answers" versus the "problem" pictures, the group decided that "answer" pictures have several disadvantages:

- They preach to learners instead of helping them develop analytic skills.
- They give solutions rather than stimulating discussion in which learners may suggest other practical answers that are more acceptable to them.
- They narrow the learner's viewpoint by giving only one answer where there may be several.

Part II

Note: Part II was designed to help trainees examine the relative effectiveness of different pictorial styles.

STEP 5—Pin or tape the four pictures (see *Materials, Part II*) in the display area.

STEP 6—Ask the group to discuss and decide which picture illustrates its subject matter most clearly and analyze their reasons for the selection.

STEP 7—Ask the trainees to consider which of the four pictures would have the most meaning for the villagers with whom they work. Discuss why that picture would be most effective.

WHAT HAPPENED

The participants arrived at a group decision that although photos supply the most concrete information, the background detail tends to take emphasis away from the main subject and is often distracting. In the case of line drawings, the group decided that it was usually difficult, unless the picture were well drawn, to determine what was being represented. The group felt that rather than wasting time on guessing at the meaning of a line drawing, time would be better spent if focused on the problem area itself.

Part III

Note: Part III was designed to demonstrate the use of one picture as

opposed to two different pictures when the purpose is to stimulate participation in discussion.

STEP 8–Show some pictures selected from the picture resource file (see *Materials, Part III*), and lead a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of using one picture or two different ones.

STEP 9–Divide the participants into two groups.

STEP 10–Have each member of *Group 1* select one picture. Then have *Group 2* members each select two different pictures. (Picture selection to be made from the full file.)

STEP 11–Distribute paper and pencils and have all participants write questions that apply to the pictures they have selected.

STEP 12–Ask all members of both groups to try out their own picture–or pictures–and questions, each with the nearest person, and then to write an evaluation of the effectiveness of the material.

WHAT HAPPENED

Group members agreed that one discussion-starter picture is good if:

- it shows a scene and people that look familiar
- it is a picture that calls for explanations
- the leader has planned in advance questions to get the discussion underway

The group also decided that two different pictures are good if:

- they seem quite different but, in fact, compare similar things, people, or situations
- the leader has planned questions in advance focused on identifying and explaining contrasts

Developed by Leon Clark and used in Ghana.

Using Comic Books

TIME: 1 hr.

Comic books are popular with adults in certain rural areas and serve as another method of stimulating discussion. This activity was used to give the group practice in creating stories using comic book techniques. The consultant hoped that the stories would have clear meaning and cultural relevance to villagers with whom the group would be working.

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

A large table

A large pile of pictures that have been cut, frame-by-frame, from comic books with captions deleted and out of sequential order

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1—Place the pictures on the table and ask each group member to select an interesting picture from the pile. When initial selections have been made, ask each person to select five or six more, and to build a story on a subject that is suggested by the pictures selected.

STEP 2—Invite each participant to show his or her pictures and to tell a story about them.

STEP 3—Lead a discussion on the results of the activity.

WHAT HAPPENED

A variety of important points were made during this group discussion:

- Although the creativity of each participant was limited by the subject matter of the available pictures, within this framework it had been possible to tell a variety of stories.
- The stories told by the participants at this practice session were almost all based on each individual's professional and personal taste, rather than culturally relevant to villagers.
- Using comic books allows the trainer or facilitator more freedom than serialized posters [see page 97], but less freedom than the flexiflan [see page 98].

Used by Lyra Srinivasan in a workshop conducted in the Philippines.

Poster Parade

TIME: 1½ hrs.

The consultant wanted the trainees to learn more about each other and to feel freer with each other before going out together to visit the villages to which they were assigned. She also felt that they might learn to use posters to involve village people in sharing their stories with the trainees.

SETTING

A room large enough for participants to move about and to arrange their poster series on walls or bulletin boards

MATERIALS

Several sets of four or five posters (each set of posters thematically related to permit building a story sequence)

Tables to accommodate the poster sets

Thumbtacks (pushpins) or tape

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1—The poster sets are placed on different tables and trainees are asked to use a set of posters to tell their own stories. Tell them there is no "right" sequence. The only requirement is that they each express their own feelings or ideas, or share some information through a brief story illustrated by the posters.

STEP 2—After a number of presentations have been made (or when the presentations begin to become repetitious), have the group reflect on what they learned from each other's stories and from the technique. Can they imagine using this teaching tool in their own work? How would they go about it?

Note: Good serialized posters usually contain four or five pictures representing a specific story line or problem. There are several ways of using them. They can first be placed in the designer's original order and then shuffled and rearranged according to the desires of group members to create different versions of the same story. They can also be laid out at random. Although the general topic will be the same for all who use the set, a good deal of creativity emerges as the trainees tell their own version.

WHAT HAPPENED

Participants managed to get as many as four quite different stories from the same set of posters. They felt quite at home with the method and used it in their visits to the village and also in reporting back to the total trainee group after their trip to the villages.

Designed by Lyra Srinivasan in a workshop conducted in the Philippines.

Flexiflans in the Barrios

TIME: 2 hrs.

The trainers wanted to introduce flexiflans before the trainees went out for their first visit to the barrios *because they felt that flexiflans might serve as an ice-breaker with the village people.*

SETTING

A quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

A set of flexiflan figures colored to depict both trainees and village people (these should be prepared ahead of time by the staff. See page 100 for guidelines for making flexiflans)

A flannelboard

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1—Pick up the figures, place them on the board, and describe some situation that trainees may encounter when they go into the village. (The trainees, for example, may be shown explaining who they are and why they have come; the village people may be shown coming from their various activities, bringing their children, telling who they are, etc. The situation shown depends on the imagination of the trainer. The important thing is to show how the figures can be moved and placed to tell a story or depict a changing scene.)

STEP 2—Invite trainees to come forward, to move the figures about, to illustrate their own plans for going to the *barrio* or village.

STEP 3—Ask the teams that are going together to the same place to use the flexiflan figures to "act out" their group plans for their first trip to the village and their initial contact with the people there.

STEP 4—Ask trainees to comment on each other's plans, making suggestions to each other about different techniques to use and methods for encouraging the community members to give information about themselves and their activities.

STEP 5—Ask whether any of the groups would actually use flexiflans. How would they do it? Reflect on how the flexiflans helped them to get into a discussion of their own plans for the community visit.

WHAT HAPPENED

Trainees seemed quite reluctant at first to work alone with the flexiflan figures. They did better when they were working as teams, planning their *barrio* visits. One of the benefits of the activity was that they were able to shift their natural anxiety about going into the villages for the first time to the figures they were using. By projecting their own

feelings onto the figures, it became easier for them to deal with those feelings objectively.

Note: The more figures—persons, animals, household implements, farm tools, food items, etc.—the more diverse the stories that can be told or problem situations examined. Flexiflans work best when the figures are prepared ahead of time and laid out on a table for learners to select as needed to tell a story, describe a situation, or illustrate a topic.

The story comes entirely from the imagination of the narrator and deals with something he or she considers important to communicate. If two persons have opposing ideas, they can use flannel scenes to illustrate different approaches or solutions. It is always easier to address an issue presented through figures in imaginary situations than it is when limited to a verbal exchange between two persons with differing views.

GUIDELINES FOR MAKING FLEXIFLANS

Flexiflan figures are made out of light cardboard. They are like the figures used on a flannelboard except that arms, legs, head and waist are movable. Make a flexiflan figure as follows:

1 Draw, separately, two arms, two legs, a torso, and a head on lightweight cardboard. Some figures can be made with movable arms only, or with only movable legs or head or waist.

2 Place a dot on each body segment you draw to indicate where it attaches to the torso or other body part.

3 Cut out body parts.

4 Use a hole punch or some sharp object to make holes where you have placed the dots. Be sure you don't punch the holes too close to the edge of your cardboard cutouts.

5 Attach the parts of the body to the torso by putting a pipecleaner or a piece of string through the matching holes.

6 Twist the pipecleaner or tie a knot on both sides of the joined sections; make sure the knots are large enough not to slip through the holes. (Use an *eyelet punch* if one is available; it will make attaching the body parts easier. Put the eyelet in the puncher; place both flexiflan sections to be attached together with the dots on both body parts lined up; slip the aligned parts into the eyelet punch; push the punch handles together firmly and release.)

7 Use glue or tape to attach small pieces of sandpaper or flannel cloth to the back of each of the figure parts so that the figures will stick to the flannelboard in any position. (If you do not have a manufactured flannelboard, make one by attaching a large stretched piece of flannel or burlap to wood, cardboard, a blackboard, or a wall.)

8 Draw in the faces and paint or crayon the figures, using faces, clothing and hair styles appropriate for the group.

Adapted from an activity used by Lyra Srinivasan and Catherine D. Crone in the Philippines. Flexiflans were developed by Lyra Srinivasan, in 1975, for use in the Philippines.

SECTION FOUR:
Assessing Progress and Results

Assessment or evaluation reveals the fit or match between what is needed or intended in a certain situation and what actually exists. Each of us practices evaluation every day of our lives. Whenever we ask ourselves if what we are doing matches what we want to do, we are practicing evaluation. If it does not, if we find discrepancies, we make changes that will bring us closer to achieving what we want. We evaluate in order to adjust what *is*, so that we can more nearly match what we believe *ought to be*. What needs changing may be our behavior, the resources we are applying, or the methods and approaches we use. Sometimes it is our expectations themselves that require adjustment.

The principle behind program evaluation is no different from the principle of evaluation applied in our daily lives. Sometimes we look at a program, or at some segment of it, to see whether it is "on course," moving in the direction and at the pace we initially planned. This is called process or formative evaluation. At other times, we examine the results at the end of a program to see how successful the total enterprise was in bringing about the purposes stated at the start. This is called summative or final evaluation. It enables administrators or funders to decide whether to use similar approaches in other settings.

Evaluation can be carried out by "internal" evaluators, members of the project team or staff. Or it can be carried out by "external" evaluators, people outside the project who have no vested interest in the progress or outcomes.

Your task probably will be to help program staff become more effective internal evaluators, able to collaborate productively with outside evaluators.

The exercises included here have a number of purposes:

- to make evaluation less threatening
- to demonstrate that evaluation is useful in planning and carrying out educational activities

To reemphasize that evaluation is easier if:

- an accurate needs assessment has been carried out
- clear objectives are stated or affirmed by participants
- a plan for evaluation is part of the original program design
- to show several kinds of evidence or data that are useful for evaluation
- to illustrate the kinds of choices that evaluation can help the facilitator make—either to revise the design of a learning activity or to change the way it is carried out
- to alert trainees to the possibility of unexpected side effects when they carry out an educational activity

The activities in this section present simple ways to assess the effectiveness of specific learning activities that trainees are planning and carrying out. Trainers with responsibility for conducting workshops entirely devoted to evaluation, including the complex task of overall program evaluation, may want to refer to another World Education publication, *Demystifying Evaluation* by Noreen Clark and James McCaffery, which describes a workshop for training program staff in the methods for assessing community-based programs.

How to Assess Learning

TIME: 45 minutes

"We discovered that many of our trainees were overlooking a step in the process of lesson development. Few of them understood the importance, and perhaps the process, of periodic evaluation. We decided we needed an activity to help the trainees become aware of the need for, and the techniques of, checking what occurs as a result of any learning activity."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Paper (several sheets for each participant) or notebooks and pencils or pens

Blackboard and chalk
or
Newsprint and felt pen

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–As a preface to the activity, explain in your own words that it is important to assess the results of the ideas we teach or share with learners. We need to *evaluate* whether or not learning has taken place. When a learning activity is finished it should be routine to check whether people have learned what was intended. If not, we must reexamine our teaching techniques and improve upon them. If we set specific learning objectives for each session, evaluation is easier. Learning objectives should indicate not only what we expect people to learn, but also how we will know that they have learned it.

STEP 2–Ask all participants to think of a lesson they recently have taught, either to a group or an individual. (Examples: How to make a dress, or what foods enrich the diet.)

STEP 3–Call on several participants to share their own experiences with the group and then ask each one the following questions:

- What did the villagers want to learn?
- Did they or did they not learn it?
- How do you know they did or did not? What evidence or proof did you examine?
- How was the evidence obtained?
- If you were to teach the same lesson again, would you do it differently? What would make it better? Why do you believe this?

STEP 4–Ask the group to think again of the same teaching/learning experience and to use it as a basis for answering, in writing, the following questions:

- What were the *objectives* of the learning sessions?
- What evidence, or proof, did you examine to show that the people learned what they wanted to learn?
- How did you get the evidence? What did you have the learners do? What questions did you ask them?

STEP 5–Ask the group to formulate a list of the various ways to obtain evidence of learning on the basis of their own written responses to the questions in Step 3. Write these on newsprint or on the blackboard.

Note: Here are some points that you may want to make sure are included:

Evidence of learning can be obtained by:

- asking learners to demonstrate the skill they learned
- asking learners to answer questions–verbally or in writing
- noting learners' voluntary attendance at meetings
- noting the questions they ask and answers they give
- noting their willingness to respond to questions, volunteer information, take part in discussion, or demonstrate a skill
- observing the general behavior of learners, and noting any statements that might reflect knowledge or attitude-change taking place during and after the learning session
- visiting learners in their homes, talking with them informally, and observing behavior that indicates whether or not learning objectives have been achieved

WHAT HAPPENED

The trainees were surprised to discover that they had actually been doing evaluation without calling it by that name. They were able to refine and sharpen the steps necessary to see if their objectives had been met. They realized that by organizing the questions that they ask themselves and others, they could gather specific useful information that would help them to assess the results and to plan next steps with the learning group.

Field-tested by Patchanee Natpracha and Noreen Clark in Thailand.

Basic Questions

TIME: 1½ hrs.

This simple and logical tool was used in structuring the assessment of a participatory learning experience.

SETTING

Any quiet meeting place

MATERIALS

Prepared evaluation questionnaire (see page 106)
Felt pen

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Ask the group to consider the question, "What does evaluation mean to you?"

STEP 2–Ask each person to write a short definition or explanation of evaluation.

STEP 3–Ask each person to read aloud his or her definition and have these recorded on newsprint taped to the wall. Help the group to create a group definition by discussing the individual contributions and eliminating overlapping ideas.

STEP 4–Next, put up the questionnaire that has been prepared on newsprint where everyone can see it.

STEP 5–Have the group work together to propose answers to each question.

STEP 6–Have a member of the group write all of the proposed answers on large sheets of wall-mounted newsprint.

WHAT HAPPENED

The group found that the answer to one question was often dependent on the answer to another. Therefore, participants had to make adjustments in their answers as they proceeded. The process was facilitated by the use of the newsprint to which the group constantly referred in order to see the answers to other questions.

Used by Sean Tate in Pakistan in a workshop to train staff in program evaluation.

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1 ***Why*** should we evaluate?

2 ***What*** should we evaluate?

3 ***How*** should we evaluate?

4 ***Who:*** is responsible for the evaluation?
is going to do the evaluation (data gathering, analysis, etc.)?
should know about the evaluation results?
is the audience?
will be interviewed, questioned by questionnaire, observed?

5 ***Where*** should we do this?

6 ***When*** should we do it?

7 ***How often*** should this occur?

8 ***How many*** people should we ask/observe?

9 ***How much:*** are we capable of doing (in terms of abilities, personnel, time)?
should we do?
does it cost?

Note: The order in which these questions are discussed is important. "Why" needs to come first.

What Did I Do Wrong?

TIME: 2 hrs.

"The group of facilitator-trainees had conducted their first learning session in a village the previous day. They had designed careful step-by-step strategies for their roles and had mastered the theory of maximum learner participation, but putting these principles into practice during the learning experience was not so easy. Before the second learning session, we introduced the following activity designed to aid self-assessment. We hoped to develop greater expertise in identifying situations where a facilitator's behavior may inhibit learner participation."

SETTING

Any quiet, large enough meeting place

MATERIALS

Paper and pencils

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Ask the group to go over every single step of the learning experience as it was field-tested, writing down exactly what the facilitator said and did, and what the learners said and did.

STEP 2–Next, ask the group to assess each of the facilitator's actions. Consider such questions as these:

- Instead of the facilitator, could the learner have done this?
- Could another type of question have elicited more response from the learner?
- Did learning materials prompt the expected responses? If not, was it the fault of the materials themselves, or of the manner in which they were presented?

Note: Rather than directly pointing out problems, try to set an example of participation by allowing trainees to discover problems for themselves.

STEP 3–Have the group review physical factors, such as setting arrangement, placement of the facilitator, location of the learning group, etc:

WHAT HAPPENED

Participants found this activity invaluable. It was useful both as an assessment device and as an aid to planning the next learning experience. They were able to identify problems for themselves and work toward solutions. They noted, for example, that out of habit or nervousness, they tended to dominate a session and their uneasiness about silences caused them to force the pace, imposing their own views instead of encouraging participation. They agreed that facilitators need patience, so that members of a learning group can overcome their initial

shyness. Following this activity, the group became more self-critical, and began to point out any carelessness of the leader about such points as not waiting long enough for a response, monopolizing the discussion, etc.

Many of the initial problems were solved by the time the facilitators were ready to conduct a second learning experience, and this and further sessions became models of learner participation.

Note: In a similar workshop conducted in Kenya, Noreen Clark and Catherine D. Crone found the following form helpful in enabling trainees to record and analyze their learning activities.

GROUP MEETING ANALYSIS FORM

Village: ______________________

Date of Meeting: ______________________

Steps the facilitator followed during the session (include questions asked and materials used)	Things the learners did in response to materials, questions and statements made by facilitator (include questions, statements, actions)	What the facilitator might have said/ done to encourage members to share their ideas, to take more active part in discussion (include ways of solving leadership problems)

1 ______________________
2 ______________________
3 ______________________
4 ______________________
5 ______________________
6 ______________________
7 ______________________
8 ______________________
9 ______________________

Designed by Lyra Srinivasan for a two-week workshop with staff of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

Planning Home Visits

TIME: 1½ hrs.

Home visits not only help to extend beyond the classroom the feeling of a supportive relationship between facilitator and participant, but also provide an opportunity to see the extent to which ideas generated in class are being put into practice. In this exercise, the trainees considered what they could and should observe in a home visit, and what kind of behavior on their part would make this form of follow-up most useful.

SETTING

Any quiet meeting place

MATERIALS

Newsprint and felt pen

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1–Explain to the group that the session will center on the uses of home visits and how best to conduct them.

STEP 2–Ask participants to divide into smaller groups, so that they can more easily discuss the following questions:

- What can be learned through observation and conversation during a home visit?
- What kind of facilitator behavior is most appropriate during a home visit?

Ask that answers be specific and all responses be recorded. Allow ample time (at least half an hour).

STEP 3–Reconvene the groups, and on large sheets of paper list all suggestions from the smaller groups, first for question *A*, then question *B*.

Note: List A suggests what might be learned by making home visits. At another time (see Step 4) the group might develop this list further and create an observation checklist to be used in project evaluation. *List B* constitutes criteria for conducting a home visit, that is, acceptable behavior for the facilitator. It is important to discuss fully each item reported by the small groups. The suggested "home visit behavior" should be generally accepted by the whole group before it is added to the criteria, the list of "do's and don't's" of home visiting.

STEP 4–(Optional; steps 4 and 5 will increase the time needed)–Ask participants to use *List A* (things that might be learned during a home visit) to develop an observation checklist. In developing this checklist, ask small groups to refer to their criteria and be sure that the checklist is developed in light of what is acceptable visitor behavior (in most instances, for example, a checklist is better filled out after a visit rather than during it, so the list must be composed of things that are easy to observe and remember). Allow 30 to 60 minutes.

Ask the groups to determine how they will decide whom they will visit. Point out that if a number of people are visited systematically over a period of time, the information documented by the visitor can be used to assess change and progress. The home visit can have two uses: to assist those visited, and to assess progress and document new problems to be addressed.

STEP 5–(Optional) Give the group 30 minutes to design a scheme for using their checklists, including how they will select people to visit, when they will visit, how often, and how they will compile and use the information they record. Reconvene groups and ask someone from each to describe that group's home visit design.

STEP 6–Have the group role-play scenes from home visits, using their checklists and criteria as a basis for conducting the visit. Give those playing the people visited a chance to think up situations that might actually occur, or provide them with descriptions you've prepared in advance.

WHAT HAPPENED

The activity helped the trainees, who were village "facilitators," to see connections between their roles as facilitators in learning groups and their activity in visiting learners in their homes. They also saw that what they learn in home visits can provide valuable information to be used in planning future learning activities. One group compiled the following "Guide for Home Visits."

Used by Abeba Wolderufael and Noreen Clark in a facilitator training workshop in Ethiopia.

GUIDE FOR HOME VISITS

1 A leader should visit as many participants as possible. Visits can be made as often as possible, but an identifiable group of at least 10 should be visited on *at least* four occasions over the next class cycle. Forms should be completed after every visit. If a participant being followed drops out, she should be visited to discover the reason. Another person to visit regularly should be selected. Forms should be filed at central office.

2 Participants may be selected in several ways:

   a) Leaders can use the class enrollment list and select, for instance, every fifth or sixth name until at least 10 are identified as persons to be visited.

   b) Leaders can take a representative cross-section of the classes: some young, some old, community leaders, innovators, participants who seem to need the most assistance, etc. If this method is used, staff and leaders should document in writing the criteria for selecting each participant. This should be filed at the central office.

3 Visits for the sake of observation should follow the customs prevailing in the community (i.e., to visit only at certain times when it is considered proper to do so). The list developed in leader training provides a good basis for conducting visits.

4 Observers should complete the home visit form *after* a visit, and not in the presence of participants or their families. Observers should give as much information as possible under "General Comments." These comments should center around items identified in group leader training.

5 Observers should try to give as much advice and assistance as possible to people visited, making use of ideas developed in leader training. The type of assistance given should be recorded on the observation form.

From the Life through Integrated Family Education Project (LIFE), Ethiopian Women's Association, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

A Simple Evaluation Tool

TIME: 2½ hrs. (Part I – 1 hr./Part II – 1½ hrs.)

"As part of a workshop to train facilitators from communities to work with groups of women in developing educational activities, we wanted to provide the trainees with a tool that would help them do three things: keep track of what happened in each learning activity; become aware of problems that might tend to recur in the group; and plan future activities based on the needs of their learning group."

SETTING

A large, quiet meeting place

MATERIALS

A suggested outline for a Weekly Log form
(1 copy for each trainee – see sample on page 114.)

Pens or pencils

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY (Part I)

STEP 1–Ask the trainees to imagine that they are explorers on a journey to a place never visited before. Although they know the general direction, they can expect to make some wrong turns. They must try to be aware of the mistakes they make to avoid going too far out of their way. As explorers, part of their future responsibility will be to tell others how to reach the new place.

STEP 2–Ask the group the following questions:

- As you make your journey, what can you do to be sure that you remember everything that is important to tell others?
- What kinds of things will you need to remember to tell others who want to make the journey?

STEP 3–Discuss the above questions and then ask the group to think about planning learning activities with community groups in the same way they would plan the journey they had been discussing. Other people will want to know what you discovered: What things went right? What problems were encountered?

STEP 4–Hand out a copy of the sample Weekly Log form and tell the group that such a log is one way to help keep track of what happens in a learning activity. Explain that they are going to develop a log that will suit their own planning activities.

STEP 5–Discuss each question on the log, asking trainees why they think, or do not think, each particular piece of information is important. Have them decide whether or not they want to keep each log item or question in their own logs. Is there any information a facilitator should know that is not included? If so, what questions should be added?

Note: By the end of this activity, the groups should have developed their own log to suit their own purposes. Prepare copies for use in Part II.

Part II. To prepare for this activity the trainer will need to choose a role-play situation that represents a real concern to community members:

- There is an outbreak of disease in a nearby area. Some local residents fear it may spread to their community.
- The crop yield this year is very low but farmers do not know why. They are worried that there will not be enough crops both to feed their families and to sell.
- Some community members want to start a cooperative project to make more money but do not know how to begin. They have not yet decided on the kind of product to make and sell. You may also wish to use a photograph, a story, or a drawing to begin the role-play dialogue. In addition, it may be helpful to prepare a list of questions to ask the "community members" that will focus discussion.

STEP 6–Ask those who will play the parts of the community members to sit in a circle. Tell them to pretend that they are members of a community who are concerned about the problem you present and are meeting with you to discuss and solve it, if possible.

STEP 7–Have the observers sit on the outside of this circle, watch what occurs, and take notes on their logs about anything that pertains to each log question.

STEP 8–Start the role-play discussion with the trainees playing community members. (About 15 minutes). Allow a few minutes for the observers to complete their notes.

STEP 9–Start with the first question on the log and ask for observers to respond to it. Then encourage the entire group to discuss the questions and come to some agreement about what occurred and how to describe it clearly and accurately on the log. Repeat until you have completed all of the questions on the logs.

STEP 10–Review any particular questions that gave the groups difficulty. Discuss more fully what kind of information the question intends to elicit. If there still are problems in understanding the question ask the group to suggest ways to rephrase and clarify it. In this way groups will develop a model for describing specific activities, actions, or problems in a given learning activity.

WHAT HAPPENED

This particular log has been used in two different countries, first in a training workshop and then as part of an ongoing system of evaluation. Initially, there was a tendency to describe events in very general way, e.g., "The learning group had difficulty deciding on what topic they wanted to discuss." After more practice the trainees could see the value of being quite specific: "Several members of the learning group were interested in dress-making, others in improving the appearance of the village, and still others were not sure what topics they wished to discuss." They saw that having specific information made it easier to evaluate what had gone on and to design the next learning activity.

WEEKLY LOG

Facilitator: ______________________________

Village: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

This form is to be completed in detail for *every group meeting* in each village and submitted to the fieldwork supervisor.

1–Of the tasks the group members agreed to accomplish as a result of the last group meeting, which ones were accomplished (or accomplished in part) by the time of this meeting?

Task (Describe) ______________________________

____

____

____

Person(s) who accomplished task (Name) ______________________________

____

____

Person(s) who partially accomplished task (Name) ______________________________

____

____

If task was not accomplished, why not? ______________________________

____

____

2–On what day was the group meeting held this week? ______________________________

At what time was the meeting held? ______________________________

How long did it last? ______________________________

If a meeting was not held this week, explain why not.

____

____

3–Who attended this meeting? (List each person by full name.)

____

____

____

4–What teaching aid was used to start discussion? (Explain in detail)

____

____

5–What topic(s) or subject(s) were discussed at the meeting? (Describe in detail)

____

____

____

6–Was a decision made by the group? Yes —— No ——

If yes, what was the decision?______________________

____

____

____

If no, why not?______________________________

____

____

7–What tasks or responsibilities were agreed to by members of the group as a result of this week's meeting?

____

____

____

Task (Describe) ______________________________

____

____

Person who agreed to do the task (Name) ______________________________

8–What other activities related to the project were carried out by group members this week? Who was involved? What outside resources were used? Describe group activities in addition to the group meeting.

Activity (Describe) ______________________________

____

____

Members who Participated (Name) ______________________________

____

____

Outside Resources (Name) ______________________________

____

____

9–What was the biggest problem encountered by the facilitator this week? ______________________________

____

____

10–What was the biggest problem encountered by the group this week?

11–List here other comments, suggestions, ideas.

Log used by Noreen Clark and Catherine D. Crone in a project jointly sponsored by World Education and, in Kenya, The National Christian Council of Kenya and, in the Philippines, The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

SECTION FIVE:

Designing and Field-Testing Participatory Learning Activities

This section deals with what is perhaps the most essential element in training: putting new concepts into action. The earlier sections have stressed the involvement of trainees in their own learning. The field-test situation described here gives them a chance to plan participatory learning experiences, to use those designs in a real situation, and to receive help in adjusting their designs if necessary. Here they test their mastery of the whole cycle of design and implementation skills: needs assessment, setting objectives related to needs, choosing appropriate methods and techniques, and evaluating results.

The activity in this section is based on the concepts and skills addressed in earlier sections. Field practice assures greater mastery of these concepts and skills. Whether your goal is to enable trainees to construct a total curriculum of interrelated learning sequences or simply to help them develop a few designs for participatory learning events, field practice is a critical part of the training experience.

A workshop of two or three weeks may provide the setting for training and culminate in a concentrated field experience like the one described here. Or if sponsoring agencies, resource staff, and trainees all live within easy commuting distance of each other, the training sessions and field test activities could be spread over several months. Whatever pattern is used, a good deal of planning is involved. Trainers, sponsoring agencies, and planning groups must provide resources, arrange test sites, and plan logistics and administrative procedures to be sure that conditions are suitable for effective field-testing.

You will want to carry out this field-testing in a place with easy access to villages or neighborhoods whose residents are similar to the population with which trainees will be working in the future. Before the work is initiated, the workshop sponsors must obtain the cooperation and interest of community leaders. The activity should not be one in which the community is simply being used by the trainees, but should provide a real opportunity for community members to gain something for themselves as well.

In World Education's international experience, we have found that relationships with villages are substantially stronger if the sponsoring agency has invited community members to choose local people to join the workshop, to take part in the training and field-testing, and to serve as village education coordinators. Sponsoring agencies may want to prepare criteria to help the communities choose their participants.

You and the planning committee will need answers to a number of questions before adapting the materials in this section to the needs of your trainees:

1. You will want to be sure that the workshop sponsors have completed the necessary preparations. Have community leaders been consulted and are they enthusiastic about the proposed activities? If not, what steps can be taken imme-

diately to prevent misunderstandings and difficulties when the trainees are ready to go to the villages?

2. If the decision has been made to train village education coordinators, have they been chosen? What more needs to be done to be sure they will participate?

3. You will also want to be assured about the trainees' capabilities. Have they worked together sufficiently to become a functioning team? Are they committed to learner-centered education? Have they discovered some of their own blocks to understanding adult learners and increased their sensitivity to community residents and their needs? Are they familiar with a range of techniques for identifying the needs of learners? Can they choose and use different methods and materials? Do they understand the usefulness of basic assessment techniques? Your trainees may have developed these skills in the first phase of a workshop that flows naturally into this kind of field-testing as a second phase. Or they may have had previous training. In this case, you will need to spend some time, before the field-testing, to review the concepts and skills basic to the work to be undertaken here. You want to assure that the experience will be entered into with common understanding and commitment.

Prior training cannot simply be taken for granted.

The success of this kind of workshop, which involves independent activities by small teams, will depend on the informal relationships between the resource staff and the trainees. If the teams feel free to consult the resource staff when they need help, and if staff members feel free to offer additional training and their own observations of team activities, then good use will be made of all the resources available. If not, progress will be slower, frustrations higher, and time wasted.

A good field-test workshop can be enormously satisfying. Energy levels are high and the exhilaration of applying what has until then been merely theoretical is a real encouragement in the midst of much hard work.

If you are working with people whose major responsibility is in the area of educational planning or administration, you will want to spend some time considering the details of planning. You may then decide to include the activity (Appendix A, page 131). Consider whether your trainees would be helped by the use of this tool. If you do use this exercise, it will necessitate careful planning so that the activity can be carried out without using too much time or allowing participants to become confused over the mechanics of the activity.

Developing and Testing Learning Experiences

TIME: 5 days

"The trainees had worked hard during the first phase of their training on needs assessment, the use of different techniques and materials, and evaluation. They were looking forward to spending time in the villages and putting their learning to the 'real' test. We wanted to make the trainees' field-test experience as valuable as possible by offering them structure, forms, and support. At the same time we wanted them to have the freedom that would encourage maximum creativity and initiative in their work in the villages."

SETTING

Villages or other communities (the prearranged sites for each group)

Rooms at the workshop center for each group to use as an office where materials can be stored and meetings held for planning, evaluation, consultation with workshop staff, writing reports, etc.

MATERIALS

Copies of agreed upon checklists and guidelines (see pages 124 to 129):

Procedures for Each Learning Experience

Designing a Learning Experience

Useful Assessment Data

Observation Assessment Form

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

Note: Here, the term *steps* is used to identify the sequence of the process rather than directions to be given to a group of trainees by a trainer.

STEP 1–A general session is held for all participants to initiate this phase of the training and to be sure that all assignments, procedures, guidelines are understood. Divide the group into teams. Assure them that the workshop staff is available to consult with them when needed. Describe clearly the procedures for seeking help.

STEP 2–Each team plans its approach to the village, designs the needs assessment activities it will use, obtains the comments of a staff member on these, then goes out to the village. (Individual teams assemble the resources they need to carry out their learning designs.)

STEP 3–Teams return and, if feasible, report on their visits to the whole group. They assess the data gathered. They decide on a design for verifying the interests and needs identified in their village.

STEP 4–Each group returns to the village and implements its design to verify interests.

STEP 5–Teams work on their initial learning design. Plans are tested with resource staff, materials prepared, and practice sessions conducted with whatever help is needed from the staff.

STEP 6–The team makes assignments to its members for their roles in the activity, including observation and reporting. The team decides whether to use one of the sample observation forms or to design its own. Decisions are made about data to be collected from community participants following the experience–home visits, interviews, etc.

STEP 7–The teams implement their designs in the communities.

STEP 8–Using the data from the observation form (see pages 128 & 129) and those collected by team members, the team analyzes the results. (If serious problems were encountered in the community, they may need help from some of the resource staff. Either the team itself or the resource staff may feel that further ad hoc training for team members is essential to sharpen a particular skill or review a concept.)

STEP 9–Repeat this same process with at least two more learning designs being planned and administered by the teams. Throughout the process, resource staff interact with the team, helping them with their plans, evaluation, reporting, etc.

STEP 10–The teams write their reports of the total experience, after they have carried out their tested learning designs in the village. One of the resource people assists each team to reflect on what has been learned.

STEP 11–In one or more meetings of the entire workshop, the group shares experiences, assesses the training, and plans follow-up. Follow-up activities will, of course, depend on the function of the workshop itself in the larger plan for the implementation of learner-centered education in the region. Trainees will have a better sense of accomplishment if they can see how what they have been doing–and what they will be doing–in the villages fits into the larger picture. They need to understand how their own assignments will complement those of others who are responsible for other aspects of the program–curriculum development, training of other local staff, or continuing activities in the villages. All of these different efforts should be clearly related to long-term results and program goals and to some plan for assessment.

WHAT HAPPENED

Each team's experience was unique. Participants were able to identify areas that needed further attention if future materials and designs were to be even more closely related to the needs and objectives of villagers. Some difficulties were encountered to a greater or lesser degree by all teams.

- The whole process of observation and assessment was difficult for the trainees who were inexperienced in this field. While they knew what

data they needed, they were unsure how to go about getting it. Forms were used rigidly and they were reluctant to make adaptations.

- Planning methods to stimulate learner involvement and to critique the behavior of facilitators proved easy, but putting the methods into practice was difficult for most trainees when it was their turn to act as facilitators. Old teaching patterns and uneasiness over silences often precipitated inappropriate facilitator behavior: rushing ahead too fast, dominating discussions, giving rather than waiting for answers. A simple exercise was introduced by the resource staff to aid the groups in analyzing why they were having problems:

  They looked at each step of the learning activity to see what the facilitator had done and how the learners had reacted. Then they analyzed whether problems were due to the facilitator's behavior, the materials, the physical factors of the location of the learning session, or something else. The process took time, but proved to be a valuable learning experience.

- At first groups tended to use teaching techniques and tools in the same way resource staff had used them. Later, they introduced many changes: in the development of problem dramas, in the Broken Squares exercise, and in the use of tape ecorders. (When village women heard their own voices on tape and realized that what they had said was important enough to be part of the next lesson, they were thrilled.)

Among the most positive elements in the process were the following:

- The relationships that developed were warm and productive. Trainees soon formed an appreciation for the villagers and for the resources already present in the learners and in the villages. The village "educational coordinators" helped in overcoming communication difficulties.
- Trainees were able to use what happened in earlier sessions as the basis for planning subsequent sessions. They saw the value of allowing topics and themes to emerge from the learning group.
- In addition to identifying the topics to be covered, the village learners helped structure their own sessions. For example, they sometimes formed small groups to pursue specific learning interests; they went out to make use of local technical resources and facilities; some made an inventory of community resources.
- Trainees began to seek and use only locally available resources for educational designs. They proved extremely creative in inventing ways to make materials from objects readily at hand.

In summary, it is safe to say that the concepts and skills of learner-centered education took on reality for the trainees when they began to put them to use. However, they also recognized difficulties that can occur in practice that they had not seen when they had been the learners, and the trainers had been in charge of learning activities.

Adapted from reports of workshops in the Philippines and in Kenya. Consultants in the Philippines were Lyra Srinivasan and Catherine D. Crone and in Kenya, Noreen Clark and Catherine D. Crone.

PROCEDURES FOR EACH LEARNING EXPERIENCE

For every learning experience developed, the group is expected to do the following:

1–Determine the specific target group.

2–Do a final needs assessment of the target group to determine the content of the learning experience.

3–Design the learning experience as per the "Designing a Learning Experience" sheet (see next page).

4–Develop materials.

5–Develop assessment procedures.

6–Review the plan for the learning experience with workshop resource personnel.

7–Implement learning experience with the community.

8–Assess the outcome of the learning experience as well as the implementation process.

DESIGNING A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Who:– (Target Group) How many? What age, marital status, occupation, literacy level, etc.?

What:– (Specific content, e.g., marketing of vegetables, developing profit and loss concepts)

Where:– (Specific place in community suitable for this particular activity)

When:– (Time of day suited to learner's schedule)

OBJECTIVES:

- What knowledge and skills do you hope learners will gain through this learning experience?
- What improvements in self-confidence, participation, cooperation or openness to new ideas, etc., do you expect to result from their participation?
- What forms of participatory behavior do you wish to promote through the methods and materials you select for this activity?

PROCEDURES:

- Are you planning to incorporate any stories, problems, etc. proposed by the learners themselves? If so, when and how will you collect these contributions?
- Do you plan on using visual aids? If so, when and how will you prepare them? How will you ensure that these aids help achieve the objectives you have listed above?
- Will there be any "dress-rehearsals" for those responsible for implementing each activity?
- How will you judge whether or not, and to what degree, you have been successful in attaining your objectives?

Developed by participants at a workshop in the Philippines with staff of the Philippine Rural Reconsrtuction Movement.

USEFUL ASSESSMENT DATA

Hard data to be collected during the workshop:

For each separate learning activity conducted by the group, you might consider gathering the following types of information, if available, and decide on ways to collect it.

1–Number of persons who live in the community where the learning experience is conducted

2–Number of people who *gather* for each activity:
at the start
at the peak of each activity
at the end of each activity

3–Number of people who *participate* in each activity:
at the start
at the peak of each activity
at the end of each activity

4–Total amount of time involved in conducting each activity

5–Number of people who contribute ideas or join in the discussion, more than once, in any given learning activity

6–Number of people who participate in more than one learning activity

7–Number of people, if any, who leave during the activity; if they do, give observable or stated reason

8–Any events that influenced attendance or participation

You may want to compare data collected on each learning activity with the other teams to see if there are any conclusions you can draw about the impact of your designs.

Soft data to be collected during and following learning activities:

Learning reactions and attitudes can be recorded individually or for a group in order to estimate the effect of a learning activity. Such records may include observations by members of the group, the facilitator's own observation, or interviews with learners or with others who may have observed the learning event. (Interviews are best accomplished immediately after the learning event.) In observing learner behavior, it is possible to answer questions like these:

a–Do the learners show interest nonverbally? By their facial expression, body position?

b–Are they involved? Do they participate physically in the activity? Do they manipulate posters, play games, volunteer to serve as recorder? Do they take part in discussions?

c–Do they apply their own experience? Do they share their experience with the group? Or apply what they are learning to the problems they are facing?

d–Do they show evidence of growth? Are they moving from a discussion of felt needs to an exploration of a related problem area not previously seen as a felt need?

e—Are they helping to spread interest in the learning activities? Do they appear willing to persuade others to come to the learning activity, willing to tell others what is happening or what they are learning?

It is more difficult to estimate changes in overall attitudes. Questions like these can help.

What is the effect of the learning experience:

a–on learners' self-confidence, initiative, etc?

Are they very shy ....or........................very outgoing?
Are they very withdrawn ....or........................fully involved?

b–on learners' attitude toward the problem?

It can't be solved ....or........it can surely be solved?
Do they think it can be solved ....or...................it can be solved?
Do they rely on outside resources ....or..........on their own abilities?
Do they seem to feel the problem is manageable ....or......................unmanageable?

c–on learners' perception of women's role in a society?

How do the women see themselves?
How do others see their role?

d–on learners' knowledge gain?

Developed by participants at a workshop in the Philippines with staff of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement.

OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT FORM

1. What role does the teacher play?
   (Check for each quarter-time period)

	Time Period I	Time Period II	Time Period III	Time Period IV
Directive				
Nondirective				

Examples:

2. How many people were present during the learning experience?

	I	II	III	IV
Women				
Men				
Children				

3. How many women showed interest during the learning experience?

	I	II	III	IV
All				
Many				
Few				
None				

4. How many people participated in the learning experience?

	I	II	III	IV
Women				
Men				
Children				

Examples of participation:

How many of the same women stay from beginning to end?

Reasons for leaving, if any:

5. Number of women who participated
   0 Times
   1 - 2 Times
   3 - 5 Times
   over 5 Times

   Type of participation
   Responding to questions:
   Volunteering information:
   Asking questions:
   Physical involvement:

6. Examples of striking change in individual behavior during learning experience.

   How determined?

7. Examples of striking changes in individual attitudes toward the problem.

   How determined?

8. Any learner comments relating to women's role in economy and society?

   Examples:

9. Any learner comments relating to the learning experience?

   Examples:

10. Other Observations - Other Comments:

    Examples: knowledge gain?
    diffusion of interest?
    applies experience?

Reprinted from **Perspectives on Nonformal Adult Learning** ***by Lyra Srinivasan.***

Appendix A

The Impertinent PERT Chart

by Lyra Srinivasan

graphics by G. Werner

The Impertinent PERT Chart

The term PERT— for Program Evaluation and Review Technique—has now come into common usage among planners. It is a blueprint for the systems person. It tells when things will be started and completed, by whom and for whom, in what sequence, and with what effects.

"a PERT chart may seem complicated..."

To the lay person, a PERT chart may seem complicated: a maze of arrows, connecting lines, boxes, labels, time concepts, and sequential relationships. Some people feel that PERT charts are beyond them...not just their planning, but their reading as well.

In fact, PERTs, even to experts, are not easy. Every angle must be explored, each action must be given its time value, cause-effect relationships must be anticipated, and all resources must be charted.

Before a step-by-step blueprint of this kind can be laid out, a good deal of hard-headed thinking must be done about basics:

What is the nature of the problem?
What are some alternative ways of resolving it?
Which of these alternatives seem most suited to the project's particular situation?
What kinds of resources are available to implement the option selected?
How does one get at these resources?
While action is being taken on one front, what else should be happening on other fronts?
Who will take responsibility for what?

"What is the nature of the problem?"

Obviously, staff at various levels can and should be very much involved in probing, sifting, and making choices about these questions. If we want non technical staff to take part, the task should not appear too difficult.

Breaking the task down into small and simple units helps. It also helps if the problem is approached in an open-ended discovery way. An informal atmosphere, an expectation of enjoyment and sharing, as in a game, all help to make people "loosen up"

and participate with confidence. This is especially important if you are working with central office staff or field workers who have had little experience in long-range planning.

World Education is constantly trying to find simple ways of doing complex tasks so that the base of participation can be broadened. One such technique that developed from a field visit to a project in Ethiopia is what I call "the imPERTinent PERT chart" — or I.P.C.

Its impertinence lies in its minimal use of structure, its (temporary) independence from time sets, and its pretension to do the spade work for a more formal and scientific PERT chart at a later stage.

... minimal use of structure, etc.

The I.P.C. is designed to be easy enough so that anyone can prepare one with a minimum of cost and time. Here is what you do:

STEP 1. Begin with a warming-up exercise.

STEP 2. Follow with the actual construction of the I.P.C.

STEP 3. Calculate the time each step will take.

STEP 4. Draw lines showing how each step leads to, or influences, some other steps.

In case this seems confusing, let us take one idea at a time.

"... let's take one idea at a time."

STEP 1. WARMING-UP EXERCISE

A. Take several slips of paper about the size of the boxes below. On each paper write an action sentence that could have some bearing on the project. Include some sentences that have little or no bearing on it. Mix them up.

For example:

Collect sample literacy materials from on-going programs	Invite collaboration of other national ministries	Appoint additional field staff

Buy paper	Organize planning workshop

B. Ask your group to help you sort out the most relevant of these action sentences. Encourage discussion of reasons for preferences.

C. Leaving the discards aside, have the group put the actions they have selected in some order of priority.

D. Discuss approximate time needed for each action.

E. Using a large sheet of paper, draw a time scale with equal units of time periods (days, weeks, or months).

F. Ask the group to place each action sentence along this time-scale according to the estimate given to it in Step D.

This exercise, if thoroughly done, can be exhausting for any members of the group who lack confidence as well as experience. Allow a generous break before going on to the main exercise.

"Allow a generous break before going on..."

STEP 2. CONSTRUCT THE PERT CHART

A. ASSEMBLE THE MATERIALS NEEDED

- -Large sheet of brown wrapping paper or blank newsprint.
- -Stiff paper for pockets, or, better yet, transparent plastic.
- -Glue or scotch tape.
- -Large piece of stiff white (or light-colored) cardboard for writing "action sentences."
- -Felt pens or other writing materials in four different colors.
- -One ballpoint pen with blue or black ink.
- -Scissors.
- -Thumb tacks ("push pins") or clips for hanging up completed chart.

B. PREPARE THE CHART

- Spread out brown paper to cover about the length of a desk or small table.

- Lightly draw four parallel lines. The first line should be about six inches from the top of the paper. Let the four lines be about six to eight inches apart. The lines should be drawn the entire length of the paper.

-Cut small pieces of plastic to be used as pockets. If you have no plastic, any sturdy paper will do. The pieces should be about four inches long and an inch and a half wide.

-Glue or scotch-tape each of these pieces down so as to form a pocket. In this way, make a long row of pockets along each of the four lines. Be sure to leave space for titles in front of the first pocket on every line. We will use the term "streams" when referring to these four rows of pockets.

- Now, using a different colored felt pen for each line, write the following titles in the order given: Field Operations, Training, Curriculum Development, Research and Evaluation.

Meanwhile, have someone cut the large piece of stiff cardboard into rectangles (about 2 and a half inches by 3 inches, or slightly larger). You will need at least four dozen cards. It does not matter if they are not all exactly the same size.

The materials are now ready for group work.

"... at least four dozen cards"

C. DISCUSS THE HEADINGS

Call the attention of your group to the four headings or titles. Discuss what they might mean. Change the titles if they are not understood, but be sure to keep the four streams clearly and distinctly identified.

Note:
In our experiment we included under "Field Operations" all matters that concern the organization, physical set-up, or actual conduct of activities of adult learners.

This included such things as finding a good locale and equipping it, recruiting teachers, designing attendance registers, storing supplies, preparing the community, and arranging for transportation.

D. DECIDE WHAT ACTIVITIES WILL BE SHOWN ON THE CHART.

Invite the group to suggest activities related to any one of the four titles. (If your group is big enough, divide it into sub-groups and have each sub-group work on one of the four titles.) The idea is for those who are taking part to suggest a series of action sentences. These sentences, however, are not given to the participants, but are composed by them.

"... but are composed by them."

The suggested action sentences can be drafted on scraps of paper, but then should be written on the cards using ink of the same color as the title for that line. Color coding is important at this stage, to keep the four streams distinct, although at a later stage their interrelationships and timing will have to be considered.

When several action-sentence cards for any one stream are ready, they should be put in some kind of order by the group or sub-group concerned. (Variation: have another sub-group arrange the cards in sequence and let the original sub-group check or challenge them.)

STEP 3. CALCULATE THE TIME NEEDED

So far we have written action sentences on only one side of each card. Implementing that action, however, may require several other small steps, or may raise a number of questions that need to be answered. For example, one side of the card may say: "Recruit and orient artists, writers, etc."

On the other side, you may need to write reminders of related actions, such as:

Plan schedules for materials preparation.
Discuss ways of establishing a system by which teams teams from different disciplines can collaborate.
Determine the qualifications for each person to be recruited.

Writing these detailed memos with a felt pen on the card would be difficult. For this reason, an ordinary ballpoint pen should be used for the detailed side of the card. Small colored dots (adhesive dots or dots made by felt tip pen or crayon) can be used to color code the items on both sides of the card. Only after the action has been visualized in detail will the group be able to estimate realistically the the time required to fulfill it. Then have the group write a second card for each action, stating that the action (e.g., baseline survey) is completed. This will go in a later pocket.

"... allocate time values to each card..."

Ask the group to allocate time values to each card (e.g., a few hours, one day, two days... one week, two months). Then ask them to rearrange the cards in that line in the order in which they are to occur, and separated along a time scale.

Thus, two or more cards proposing actions that must begin at the same time may be in one pocket, but the corresponding cards showing the completion of these actions may well be in different pockets since the time required to complete each of the actions will vary.

STEP 4. SHOW HOW ACTIONS IN THE VARIOUS STREAMS AFFECT EACH OTHER

It is best tc lay out the time sequence for one entire line or stream first. Then the cards cards of other streams can be laid out so that they begin their action, or complete their action, in relation to the one laid out first (the "critical path").

A card showing a planned training workshop in one stream might need to be connected, for example, to a card indicating the production of materials in another stream if those materials will be needed at the workshop.

Use thin strips of paper or black string to show how action in the various streams are related. As you work, if new ideas or relationships should occur to the group, make new cards and relate them with lines or arrows in the same way.

Your Impertinent PERT Chart is now ready. The grcup should look at it as a whole, discuss it, and simplify it if necessary.

From this I.P.C. a more pertinent PERT chart or blueprint can later be drawn. You and your colleagues are to be congratulated.

WHAT HAPPENED

"We used this tool with a group of community development workers and extension agents. They had completed training activities related to needs assessment, materials development, teaching techniques, and evaluation. They needed a chance to plan just how they would put into practice what they had learned. We used the Impertinent PERT Chart to help them, in teams of four or five participants, to detail all the steps they would need to take.

"In order to make it easier for the group to get down to the planning, we prepared the PERT cards in advance, using different colored cards cut into pieces about two inches by four inches. We used blue for *Assessing Learner Needs*, green for *Planning a Learning Activity*, orange for *Implementing a Learning Activity*, and yellow for *Collecting Feedback and Assessment Data*. We had plenty of cards in each color, with suggested steps written on some of them and others left blank for steps the group decided to add. (See attached suggested list.)

"The teams found that the chart helped them to clarify their objectives and made it easier to plan an effective learning experience. The chance to rearrange the steps and time schedule as they proceeded helped them to be more realistic in organizing their work. One team even decided that they would try using a simplified version of the chart with community members as part of their learning activity. Not only did it stimulate the trainees' interest and participation, it also gave them confidence in their ability to plan other projects."

IMPERTINENT PERT CHART: SAMPLE CARDS

Here is a sample list of steps that need to be taken in planning an educational activity. You may wish to use it as a guideline for your own list, adapting the necessary steps, and adding to them, to fit your own training objectives.

ASSESSING NEEDS (BLUE CARDS)

- Meet with the community leaders to discuss what you hope to do and ask for their support.
- Find out how many people in the village are interested in taking part in the learning activity.
- Find out when and where the learners can attend.
- Find out what the learners identify as major problems in the community.
- Find out what kinds of economic activities the learners engage in.
- Find out what educational activities the learners have previously taken part in.
- Find out the learners' major learning interests.

- Find out basic information about the community (e.g., health, agriculture, education, transportation services available, nutritional habits, sanitation practices).

PLANNING A LEARNING ACTIVITY (GREEN CARDS)

- Review available data to identify the most pressing felt needs of the learners.
- Define the specific objectives of the learning activity in terms of knowledge, attitude, and practice/skills expected.
- Decide what resources are needed to design the materials (e.g., artist, transport, clerical help, materials.)
- Get consultants or resource group to suggest improvements that could be made before moving ahead.
- Define the specific content that must be covered in order to meet the objectives.
- Discuss how to obtain stories, anecdotes, drawings, photographs, etc., from the villagers, for use in designing learning materials.
- Decide on the learning group to be reached, where, and when.
- Decide on the teaching technique(s) to be used.
- Plan and design the materials.
- Discuss what knowledge, attitudes, skills, changes, resources are needed to satisfy the needs and interests expressed by the learners.
- Discuss ways to encourage learners to contribute ideas and ask questions, e.g., to participate actively in the learning session.
- Decide on what kinds of questions to ask.

IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNING ACTIVITY (ORANGE CARDS)

- Decide who will conduct the learning activity and who will help—where, when, and how.
- Make arrangements for letting the learners know when and where the session will take place.
- Pre-test the materials.
- Practice using the learning activities with the resource group.
- Conduct the learning session.
- Prepare a report.

ASSESSING THE LEARNING ACTIVITY (YELLOW CARDS)

- Discuss various ways to collect data.
- Decide on what kind of data you need, can obtain, and how you will get it.
- Design a plan for collecting data—where and who and when.
- Prepare the forms for collecting different kinds of information.
- Collect the information during and after the learning activity.
- Analyze the information collected.

- Determine whether you were successful in reaching the specific objectives of the learning activity.
- Discuss what problems were encountered during the learning activity.
- Discuss ways you could improve on the session you conducted.
- Assess your success in getting learners to participate actively in the discussion.
- Discuss whether your learning activities were based on the interests and needs expressed by the learners.
- Decide what the objectives of the next learning activity should be, based on your assessment of this one.
- Decide what changes you should make in your system for gathering assessment data.
- Write your report.

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